Fatter Paychecks?

The skinny on merit pay. Page 38

MARCH 2008

neatoday

Mind THE Gap

It's a high-speed, high-def, Wi-Fi world. But not for everybody.

SEE PAGE 24

nea
NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
nea.org
Great Public Schools for Every Child

THE NEA PERSONAL LOAN® ACCOUNT

We've helped over 200,000♦ members take the first step toward a DEBT-FREE future.

You could
BECOME DEBT-FREE
with rates as low as

7.99% APR†

Consolidate your high-interest debt▲ and save.

- **Non-variable rates† don't fluctuate with the Prime Rate**
- **No payments for four months§**
  (Finance charges will accrue; repayment term will start after deferral period.)
- **Affordable monthly payments**
- **Loan amounts from $3,000 to $35,000***
- **No pre-payment penalties or collateral required**
- **Repayment terms from 24 to 84 months**

Apply for a loan today. Call 1-866-266-0211.

Mention priority code GAAD4C and get a loan decision in as little as 10 minutes.

(TDD users, please call 1-800-833-6262) Monday - Thursday 8 am - 10 pm, Friday 8 am - 8 pm, ET

nea Member Benefits
neamb.com

Brought to you by:
Bank of America

♦Participation based on accounts opened since the inception of the program in 1996.

†We will set your Annual Percentage Rate (APR) between 7.99% and 18.99%, based on creditworthiness. By "non-variable rates" we mean that the APR will not automatically vary with an index such as the Prime Rate. We reserve the right to change your APR, fees or other credit terms at our discretion; however, any APR change will not affect any balance on your account at the time of the change. In most cases, a change in the APR will restart your repayment term and change your minimum monthly payment. There is a 3% transaction fee for each advance (fee: min $5; max $99). Other fees may apply.

▲We may prohibit use of this account to pay off or pay down any account issued by FIA Card Services, N.A.

*Upon approval, we will establish your credit line between $3,000 and $35,000 based on creditworthiness.

§This account offers a 4-month payment deferral feature if you take an advance within the first four months. During the deferral period, no payment will be due. Finance charges will accrue. Your repayment term will start after the deferral period. You may pre-pay at any time without penalty.

The NEA is not involved in the credit application process. All applications are subject to a confidential standard review by FIA Card Services, N.A. This account is issued and administered by FIA Card Services, N.A. Absolutely no membership dues are used to market this program.

Bank of America and the Bank of America logo are registered trademarks of Bank of America Corporation. The NEA Personal Loan is a federally registered service mark of NEA's Member Benefits Corporation and is a financial service provided by FIA Card Services, N.A. used pursuant to license.

The NEA Personal Loan program has been developed for NEA members and their families only. If a member decides not to renew membership, that person and his/her family will no longer be eligible to receive the preferred rates and fees offered through the NEA Personal Loan Program. If eligible, a replacement loan may be offered.

© 2008 Bank of America Corporation.

PLNT0308

neatoday | features

> VOLUME 26 > NUMBER 6 > MARCH 2008

24 | THE TECHNOLOGY DIVIDE

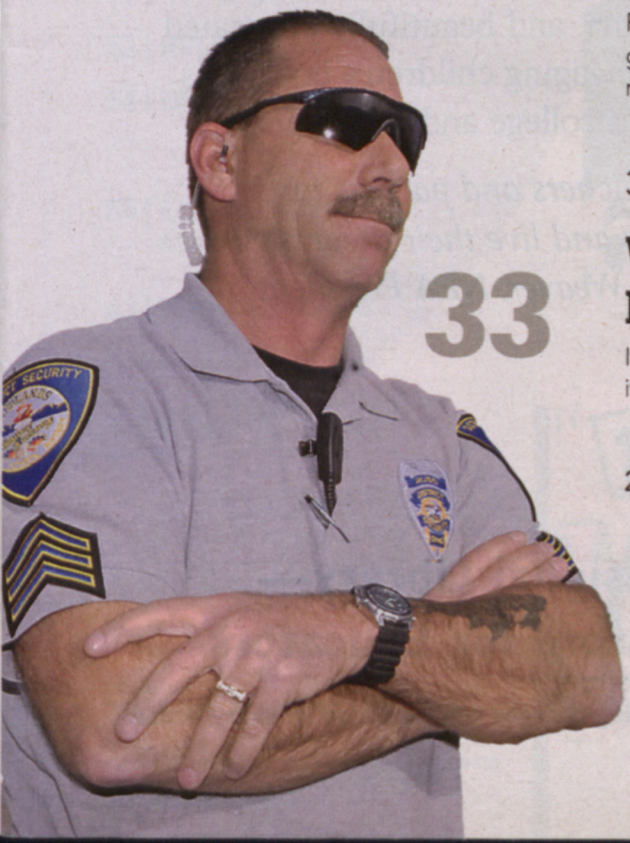
Mind the Gap

COVER STORY It may seem like kids today are born with their own MySpace pages. But the high-tech future doesn't look as bright for those without ready access to technology. They're stuck in the participation gap.

33 | ESPS AT WORK

Security Upgrade

Eyes on the changing roles of school security personnel.



36 | SEXUALIZATION OF GIRLS

Lolita in the Classroom

Racy dolls and pregnant teen stars—girlhood isn't what it used to be, and that means teaching girls isn't either.

38 | SALARY TRENDS

Where is Your Pay Plan Heading?

If your salary system isn't facing change, it soon will be.

23 | A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE

These educators know what challenges adopted students face because they have them at home.

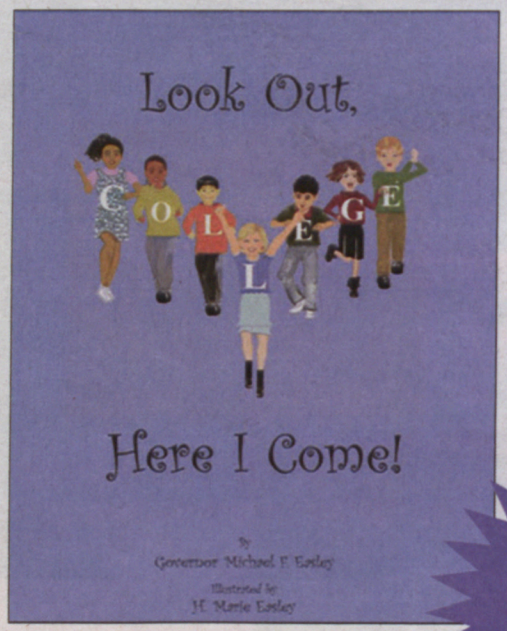
42 | TRY THIS

We're Going on a Bear Hunt!

No money for field trips? No problem! Your colleagues share tips for learning adventures right on campus.

The NEA Professional Library is Proud to Present . . .

Look Out, College Here I Come!



I wrote this book so you will go far. Because you are a star. You really are.

ORDER TODAY!

Item #2037-5-00-D
Hardcover $22.95
Item #2038-3-00-D
Paperback $19.95

Written by Gov. Michael F. Easley of North Carolina, and beautifully illustrated by his sister, H. Marie Easley, this charming and engaging children's book tells kids that it's never too early to start thinking about college and career goals.

Gov. Easley's book is a wonderful tool for teachers and parents to use in preparing children to reach their goals and live their dreams.
Reg Weaver, NEA President

To order online, go to www.nea.org

To order by phone, call 800-229-4200, toll free.

NEA Professional Library—
***THE* Bookstore for Educators**

Shipping and handling charges will be added to every order.

neatoday | departments

> VOLUME 26 > NUMBER 6 > MARCH 2008

6 | **TALKBACK**

7 | **EDITOR'S NOTE**

9 | **PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT**

11 | **IN YOUR WORDS**
What lessons have your students taught you?

13 | **UPFRONT**
Are America's kids the smartest in the world? Plus, custodians defeat a privatization push in New Jersey.

20 | **LEADING THE WAY**

44 | **BULLETIN BOARD**

47 | **THE GUIDE**
When it's time to party, we've got ideas for entertaining on the cheap.

51 | **IN PERSON**

52 | **RESOURCES**

64 | **LAST BELL**

55 | EDUCATION MARKET

63 | MARKETPLACE

13

47

64

"What worries me most...is the danger of losing our ability to compete in a new economy."
20

44

51

COVER PHOTO: DANNY PECK
ART DIRECTION, STYLING: GROFF CREATIVE, INC.

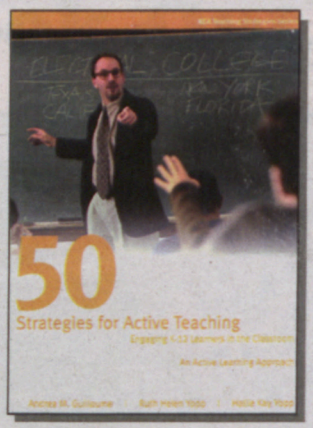
PHOTOS PAGE 1:
FROM TOP: AMY BECK; BOB ROSSITER; SUSAN GOLDMAN

PHOTOS PAGE 3:
TOP LEFT: STEVEN COBURN; RIGHT: MEIKO ARQUILLOS; CENTER: ROBERT MCFERREN; BOTTOM RIGHT: DAVID DENOMA; ILLUSTRATION: ART GLAZER

NEED A FEW GREAT APPROACHES TO CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION?

NEW!

Here are 135 Designed Just for You!



50 Strategies for Active Teaching: Engaging K-12 Learners in the Classroom

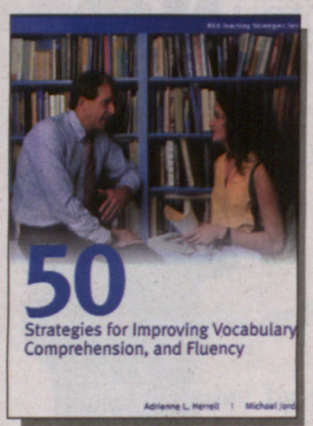
Provide a challenging classroom environment for your students by giving them a sense of ownership with their own learning. Fifty strategies are covered in this 263-page book, including: lesson preparation, implementation, alternatives and time allotment. Also includes 32 printable resource templates on CD-ROM.

Non-Member Price: $21.95 + S&H
Member Price: $19.95 + S&H
Item #0694-1-00-D

35 Classroom Management Strategies: Promoting Learning and Building Community

Get practical–and effective–strategies for creating a classroom community conducive to learning. See 12 real-life examples on the accompanying DVD.

Non-Member Price: $21.95 + S&H
Member Price: $19.95 + S&H
Item #0693-3-00-D



50 Strategies for Improving Vocabulary Comprehension and Fluency

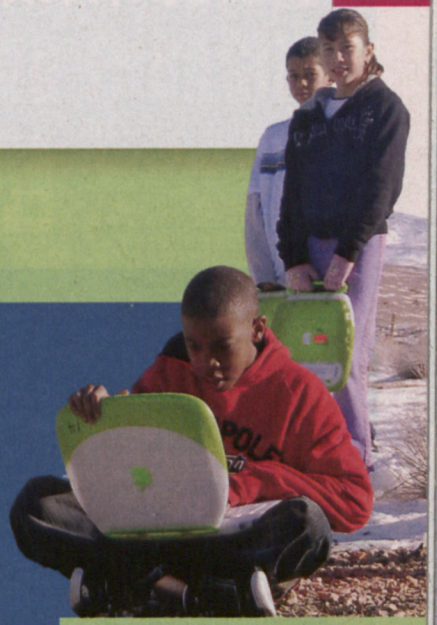
This 246-page second edition offers strategies that work to improve reading skills at all levels, K-12, including English Language Learners. Find two examples for each strategy–one in the text and the other on the accompanying CD.

Non-Member Price: $29.95 + S&H
Member Price: $25.95 + S&H
Item #0692-5-00-D

To order these or other titles,
visit the **NEA Professional Library** at
nea.org/books
Or, call **800-229-4200**, toll free.

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
Great Public Schools for Every Child

VISA
MasterCard



> NCLB

READ THE LATEST NEWS ON NCLB REAUTHORIZATION

While the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind law remains on hold, NEA got a boost from a U.S. Court of Appeals in its NCLB funding lawsuit. Read all about it and other updates on NCLB at www.nea.org/ref?nclb.

TOP CLICKS

The Widening Divide
With each advance in technology, those without access fall further behind. Why does it matter? What can be done?
www.nea.org/ref?gap

And They Came to Chicago
Check out a member's video about the Italian immigration experience. www.nea.org/ref?immigrants

Try This!
Take a field trip without leaving school! Hear some ideas from your colleagues about on-campus excursions.
www.nea.org/ref?schooltrips

WHAT'S NEW ON nea.org

NEA'S READ ACROSS AMERICA
Read Across America's 2008 Resource Calendar and toolkit highlights fun books and book events.
www.nea.org/readacross

Get the Latest from NEA Blogs

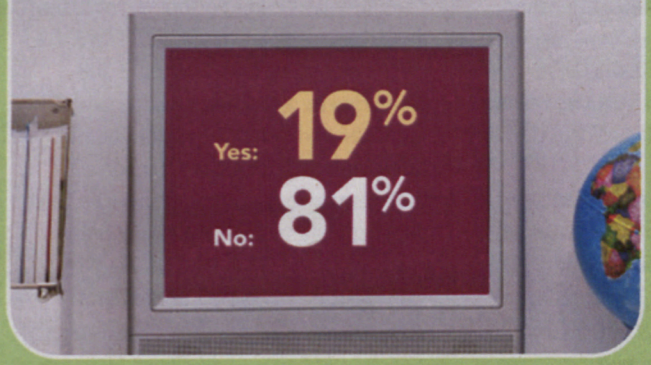
EDUCATION NEWS
Read about kids bullied for being gay, student debt stories, schools in the 'hood, and more.
www.nea.org/ref?ednotes

WORKS4ME
Tips and tricks of the trade from classroom teachers.
www.nea.org/ref?works4me

NCLB—TIME FOR CHANGE
Check the status and read the commentary.
http://nclbchange.wordpress.com

POLL

Have you (or a teacher you know) written about your teaching job in a blog?



NOW YOU'RE TALKING

Reading First

I work in a Reading First School and the workload is *outrageous* and the benefits aren't much higher than with other programs I have used....I am ready to jump ship.

Teachers Deserve Respect!

I don't know of any other job where you pretty much work every day of the year, even on vacation, and into all hours of the night most days. I spend my time and my money for my job....I pour my heart and soul into my career.
—FROM THE NEA.ORG DISCUSSION BOARDS

WHAT HAVE YOU HEARD? *Speak out on our discussion forums to debate education issues or share your stories and strategies at* www.nea.org/forums.

KIDS TOP: AMY BECK; POLL: MARTIN POOLE; NOW YOU'RE TALKING: JUSTINE BECKETT; BLOG: PETER ZUZGA

talk back

Don't Forget the Parents

Over the years, teachers have become more enforcers than educators ("Assessing the Threat," February). Because of lack of parenting, kids come to school expecting to run things, break rules, vandalize, fight, horseplay, etc., and it's the teachers who have to keep the peace, making them the enemies of the kids. Violence toward teachers will not end until parents do their jobs and send kids to school with the proper attitude toward society and the proper attitude toward learning. Teachers are not enforcers.

GARY WILSON
North East, Maryland

There is frequently a strong correlation between a child's acting out and a poor quality of parenting going on in the home. By the time the child is at the high school level, he or she has seen a parent blow up at school personnel, followed by a retreat of school administrators all too many times. The student has grown to think that this is appropriate conduct for a "good" parent, i.e., one that continually gets the child off the hook, rather than requiring the student to accept responsibility for his or her actions.

SANDY WYATT
Hope Mills, North Carolina

A SPOTLIGHT ON AUTISM

I am a special education intern with the Colusa County Office of Education. I am also a grandparent of a 7-year-old boy who is autistic ("Going Mainstream," February). It is very encouraging to read of the instructional strategies that are being used to address the social and cognitive deficits of autism and the ways that educators and paraeducators are supporting kids with autism. Thanks for including such a meaningful article in *NEA Today* on a topic that affects a lot more people than most of us realize.

TERESA MOSER
Colusa County, California

NOTHING BEATS TEACHING

I am responding to the new teacher who is concerned about statistics on teachers who leave the profession after five years ("New Teacher Advice," Interact, February). I had the same concern when I entered the education profession. For me, knowing whether or not this was the right profession was to complete my student teaching—that was a big help. The other was taking a short term assignment: maternity leave, medical leave, etc. By the end of each assignment I still wanted to be a teacher. I was a bank manager and did underwriting before going into this profession. I made a lot more money but nothing is more rewarding to me than educating individuals, watching them learn, and hearing them say, "I got it," or "Now I understand."

GREG BARON
Neptune, New Jersey

KEEPING ORDER HAS LIMITS

I enjoyed reading your January 2008 issue, except for one small bit of information. In the "Colleagues' Helpdesk" section (Bulletin Board), the question was "How do you keep order in your classroom?" Most of the suggestions were great. But I am surprised that you published the suggestion that a teacher used her cell phone to make pretend calls to keep students in line. Not only is it dishonest, but there are so many ways that it could backfire! It may work in the short term, but it will not create the atmosphere of trust and respect that is necessary to keep order for the long term.

JANET MEISINGER
St. Louis, Missouri

CORRECTIONS

In February's "Going Mainstream" article, we stated incorrectly that occupational therapists assist with gross motor skills and physical therapists with fine motor skills. The reverse is true—occupational therapists work on fine motor skills and physical therapists on gross motor skills.

In "Leading the Way," we erroneously stated that the New Jersey districts that agreed to pay $50,000 or more for first-year teachers were all in Westfield. In fact, Westfield was only one of 17 districts that agreed to the pay raise.

NEA Today (ISSN 0734-7219) is published eight times a year, monthly, in September, October, November, January, February, March, April, and May by the National Education Association, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036-3290.

Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to *NEA Today*, Attn: NEA Financial & Membership Services Address Change, Suite 420, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Telephone: (202) 822-7065.

NEA Today is mailed to all NEA members as a benefit of membership. Nonmember subscription prices: $65 for institution subscriptions; $100 for individual domestic and foreign subscriptions. For members, subscriptions represent $4.55 of annual dues.

Advertising within *NEA Today* is screened, but the publishing of any advertisement does not imply NEA endorsement of the product or views expressed.

Need to change your address?

Please send your address to NEA FMS:

BY MAIL:
NEA Financial & Membership Services
Attn: Address Change, Suite 420
1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036

BY FAX: (202) 822-7669

ON THE WEB: www.neatoday.org

LET'S TALK

Share your ideas, comments, and opinions with *NEA Today* in one of four ways. By Mail: Write to Letters, *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036 On the Web: Go to www.nea.org/neatoday, click on "Feedback," and fill in the "Letter to the Editor" section By e-mail: Write to neatoday@nea.org By Fax: (202) 822-7206

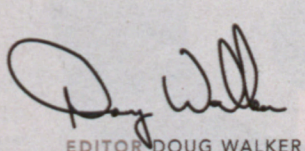
Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

WORKING WIRED

I outlined this note on a laptop computer while traveling, then e-mailed it to myself and drafted it on the desktop at home. Transmitting it once again via the 1s and 0s from my personal e-mail account to the NEA server, I was able to apply finishing touches and submit it electronically (later than I should have, I confess) to the always insightful ministrations of our copy editor.

The digital assets at my fingertips—largely provided by NEA members so I can work wherever I happen to be—make me a member in good standing of the 21st century workforce. Despite a Luddite preference for fountain pens and straight razors, I find myself on the right side of the digital divide.

However, far too many of the students we serve, and a surprising number of educators, lack everyday access to key online resources and are at risk of being left behind in a shifting economy. In the cover story (page 24), we explore what some members and communities are doing to bridge this "participation gap." Be sure to let us know what you think—via e-mail or even the postal service.



EDITOR DOUG WALKER
dwalker-neatoday@nea.org

neatoday www.neatoday.org

NEA CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER AND EXECUTIVE PUBLISHER
Jan Collins

PUBLISHER AND DIRECTOR, INTERACTIVE MEDIA
Leona Hiraoka

EDITOR
Doug Walker

MANAGER, MANUFACTURING AND PRODUCTION
Bill Fischer

MANAGER, ADMINISTRATION
Earline Spence

WRITERS/EDITORS
Michelle Chovan, Mary Ellen Flannery, Alain Jehlen, Cynthia Kopkowski, Con Lehane, Amanda Litvinov, John Rosales, Tim Walker

NEA.ORG
Paula Chavez-Talley, Sheala Durant, Bonnie Gardner, Joe Hammond, Cindy Long, Debbie Padgett, Brad Ritter, Karen Zauber

ART DIRECTION
Groff Creative Inc.

PRODUCTION
Marsha Blackburn, Christian Lopez, Alice Trued

ADVERTISING COORDINATOR
Branita Griffin Henson

ADVERTISING SALES
Rich Datz
rdatz@educationworld.com
(856) 983-7199

ADMINISTRATION
Nikole Pinkney, Liza Soviak, John Young

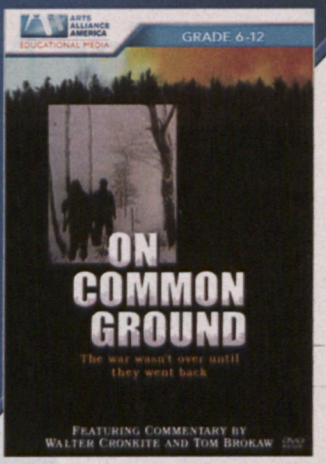
INTERNS
Truphena Choti, Ranee Patel, Svetlana Shkolnikova

LOCAL EDITOR ADVISORY BOARD 2007–08: Rosita Force, Omaha Education Association (Nebraska); Laura Fridley, Fairfax Education Association (Virginia); Clifford Kusaba, Teachers Association of Long Beach (California); Lucian Daryl Roberson, Caddo Association of Educators (Louisiana); Eric Stinson, Educational Assistants of Cherry Hill (New Jersey); Louis Lessor, Sun Prairie Education Association (Wisconsin)

We are interested in hearing your feedback:

MAIL: *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036
E-MAIL: neatoday@nea.org FAX: (202) 822-7206 PHONE: (202) 822-7207

INTERACTIVE AND ENGAGING!
Documentaries augmented for Classroom use


ARTS ALLIANCE AMERICA
EDUCATIONAL MEDIA
GRADE 6-12
ON COMMON GROUND
The war wasn't over until they went back
FEATURING COMMENTARY BY WALTER CRONKITE AND TOM BROKAW

Each DVD includes:
- Teacher's Guide and Lesson Plans
- Interactive Pop-Up version
- Interactive Quiz

Interactive Pop-Up version contains additional information to aid in classroom discussions.

ARTS ALLIANCE AMERICA
EDUCATIONAL MEDIA

To order, visit:
www.aaadvdstore.com/educationalmedia.html

DVD

Christopher Reeve: Hope In Motion does not contain an interactive pop-up version.

©2008 Arts Alliance America Educational Media. All rights reserved.

59 is the average retirement age for NEA members.

Will you be ready?

FIVE-MINUTE RETIREMENT CHECKUP

Retirement may come sooner than you expect. Will you be ready? The NEA Five-Minute Retirement Checkup will help you understand if you are planning appropriately and provide you with the **tools you need** to get started or improve your current retirement plan. **Just five minutes.** Well worth it, considering it may make a difference in your life for years.

Find out now, visit **neamb.com/5toRetire**

nea Member Benefits
neamb.com

VBNT0308

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION nea.org

Great Public Schools for Every Child

NEA PRESIDENT
Reg Weaver

NEA VICE PRESIDENT
Dennis Van Roekel

NEA SECRETARY-TREASURER
Lily Eskelsen

NEA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Mike Billirakis, Ohio
Mark Cebulski, Wisconsin
Carolyn Crowder, Oklahoma
Lily Eskelsen, Utah
Christy Levings, Kansas
Paula Monroe, California
Marsha Smith, Maryland
Dennis Van Roekel, Arizona
Reg Weaver, Illinois

NEA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
John Wilson

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

We, the members of the National Education Association of the United States, are the voice of education professionals. Our work is fundamental to the nation, and we accept the profound trust placed in us.

OUR VISION

Our vision is a great public school for every student.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to advocate for education professionals and to unite our members and the nation to fulfill the promise of public education to prepare every student to succeed in a diverse and interdependent world.

OUR CORE VALUES

These principles guide our work and define our mission:

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY. We believe public education is the gateway to opportunity. All students have the human and civil right to a quality public education that develops their potential, independence, and character.

A JUST SOCIETY. We believe public education is vital to building respect for the worth, dignity, and equality of every individual in our diverse society.

DEMOCRACY. We believe public education is the cornerstone of our republic. Public education provides individuals with the skills to be involved, informed, and engaged in our representative democracy.

PROFESSIONALISM. We believe that the expertise and judgment of education professionals are critical to student success. We maintain the highest professional standards, and we expect the status, compensation, and respect due all professionals.

PARTNERSHIP. We believe partnerships with parents, families, communities, and other stakeholders are essential to quality public education and student success.

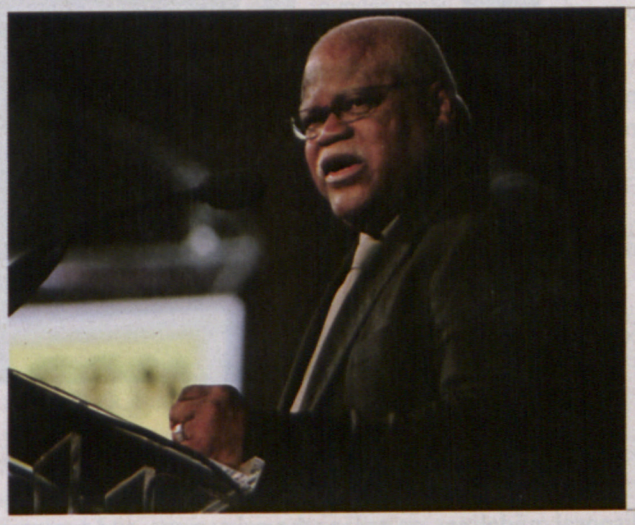
COLLECTIVE ACTION. We believe individuals are strengthened when they work together for the common good. As education professionals, we improve both our professional status and the quality of public education when we unite and advocate collectively.

A Rose By Any Other Name May Still Have Thorns

Brushing up on 'pay for performance'

At the center of a national debate about the quality of public education is the subject of teacher compensation. The issue among many is not whether to increase teacher salaries, but rather who among teachers should receive an increase and how they should earn it.

The issue of "pay for performance" for educators is gaining attention because it is touted by some presidential candidates and policymakers as the solution to what ails education. Yet much of the conventional wisdom and public discussion about teacher pay is misleading. The result is misguided policies that divert attention from addressing the root causes of teacher turnover and stagnant student achievement.



It is clear to me that folks have decided on answers before they have defined the question. The question isn't how to differentiate pay between teachers. The question is how to pay teachers a salary that encourages the creation of a great public school for every child.

The bottom line is that improving teaching improves student learning, and improving teaching means paying every teacher for more training and experience. It means paying a salary that is competitive enough to keep teachers from being tempted to leave the classroom for other jobs. It means paying an entry level salary that encourages people to enter the teaching profession.

NEA's position has been clear for decades. Teacher salaries and student learning conditions are best worked out between the educators in a local school district and the local school board. NEA members around the country have been willing to experiment and pilot all sorts of plans that might fairly and appropriately provide differentiated pay. Some members are even exploring stipends for those who teach in difficult and hard-to-staff school settings.

Similarly, there are some plans in place around the country that just don't work. They are not designed to improve teaching and learning, and they make teachers competitors rather than collaborators. Let's be honest—without the support of Team NEA working in the trenches, and without guaranteed long-term funding, compensation "brainstorms" can quickly turn into a bummer.

Our members have always felt a responsibility to help students achieve, be successful, and compete in an interdependent world. We accomplish that by making public schools great places for teaching and learning—a goal that requires paying professional salaries that truly attract and retain quality educators.

As the national voice for public school employees, we know that too many teachers and education support professionals have been denied professional pay for too long. To attract more dedicated, committed professionals into these fields, we need salaries that are literally "attractive." That is the principle behind NEA's salary campaign, which is gaining traction and securing fair and competitive compensation for teachers, ESPs, and higher education employees. Bit by bit, this strategic goal is helping local communities recruit and retain the kind of education professionals that students need and parents want.

> "Too many teachers and education support professionals have been denied professional pay for too long."
>
> —Reg Weaver

NEA local and state affiliates are exploring a variety of methods to meet the economic and professional interests of their members, and we share the thrust of that commitment. When it comes to teacher salaries, one size definitely does not fit all.

Reg Weaver

NEA PRESIDENT REG WEAVER

PHOTO: DIMA GAVRYSH

WHEN IT COMES TO TEEN PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE, PARENTS NEED EDUCATION AS WELL.

You care about your students. And you probably know them as well as anyone. That's why you should be aware that while teen drug use is down overall, one category is actually on the rise — the abuse of prescription drugs. In fact, for the first time ever, there are just as many new abusers (12 and older) of prescription drugs — such as pain relievers, depressants, and stimulants — as there are of marijuana.[1] Between 1995 and 2005, the number of substance abuse treatment admissions for prescription pain relievers increased by more than 300%.[2] **The bottom line is clear: Abusing prescription drugs can have serious consequences and ruin promising lives.**

Most students use prescription drugs appropriately — to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety, and physical pain. There is, however, a growing trend of students using and sharing these drugs to get high, often in combination with other drugs or alcohol. Seventy percent of persons aged 12 and older who abuse pain relievers say they get them from a friend or relative.[3] Obtaining these drugs can be as easy as opening the family medicine cabinet, a friend's purse, or locker. And since there is no smoke or smell, prescription drug abuse can be hard to detect.

This problem can be prevented. And as a school professional, you play an important role. Learn to recognize the signs and symptoms of prescription drug abuse, and encourage parents, grandparents, and other adults to:

- Safeguard all drugs in their homes. Monitor quantities and control access.
- Set clear rules for teens about all drug use, including not sharing medicine and always following the medical provider's advice and dosages.
- Be a good role model by following these same rules with their own medicines.
- Properly conceal and dispose of old or unused medicines in the trash.
- Ask friends and family to safeguard their prescription drugs as well.

Watch for Signs & Symptoms of prescription drug abuse in your school:

Pain reliever abuse:	Constricted pupils, nausea and vomiting, and respiratory depression.
Stimulant abuse:	Anxiety and delusions, flushed skin, and chest pain with heart palpitations.
Depressant abuse:	Slurred speech, dizziness, and respiratory depression.

For more information on prescription drug disposal guidelines, as well as the risks, signs, and symptoms of teen prescription drug abuse, visit **www.TheAntiDrug.com**, or call 1-800-788-2800.

Signed,

American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association of School Administrators
American Medical Association
American Pharmacists Association
American School Counselor Association
American School Health Association
National Association of School Nurses
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Education Association
Partnership for a Drug-Free America
PTA

[1] SAMHSA, 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (September 2007).
[2] Treatment Episode Data Set, SAMHSA, 1995-2005.
[3] SAMHSA, 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (September 2007).

Office of National Drug Control Policy

PARENTS.
THE ANTI-DRUG.

What lessons have your students taught you?

A student taught me that a caring teacher opens the door for learning. "Shannon" was an angry, out-of-control 15-year-old. She'd been a runaway since the age of nine, trying to escape an abusive home life. Before moving in with an older cousin, Shannon spent 18 months in juvenile detention. She sat in the back of class, arms crossed defensively. School was stupid, she'd decided. Nothing she'd do in school would matter in her life—until I gave a writing assignment on survival. Shannon's essay was called "I'm a Survivor." It described what she'd been through and how she'd managed to endure. I applauded her ability to share her experiences in writing, and she showed me she did care about doing well in school. I learned that encouraging and accepting her through her writing embraced her spirit.

SHEILA FREEMAN, *alternative education English teacher, Van Buren, Arkansas*

As an educator of exceptional needs high school kids, I've learned a lot about patience and tolerance. For example, when trying to teach my students to solve a one-step math problem, my frustration became obvious. In exasperation, I exclaimed, "This is not rocket science!" From the back of the room a student called out, "It is to us!" Enough said.

JACOB SCHNUR, *special education teacher, Joplin, Missouri*

I've learned to assume nothing! When teaching a unit on tall tales, we read about Pecos Bill who lassos a cyclone. I felt sure my students knew what a cyclone was, but I asked anyway. A boy raised his hand. "I know!" he said. "A monster with one big eye!" Even though I assume they'll know I'm kidding, I ask students which of the four presidents on Mount Rushmore is President Rushmore. "The first one!" a student inevitably shouts. "The third one!" says another. When your students recite the Pledge of Allegiance, do you assume they know the meaning of "pledge," "allegiance," or "indivisible?" They'll learn what they need to know eventually, but in the meantime, assume nothing.

TIM MILLER, *fifth-grade teacher, Harborcreek, Pennsylvania*

Through all my years of teaching, students have taught me many good lessons. One that stands out is that every single child is a unique and special individual seeking to connect and make sense of his or her world. As a teacher, I grab onto their moments of success!

ANA ESTRADA, *kindergarten teacher, Covina, California*

I am constantly astounded by students' insight into the complexities of life. At an early age, they understand the difference between right and wrong and see bullying and the subtleties of racism more clearly than some politicians. Through their writing, students let me into their world, show me what they worry about, what they think, and what they see as they walk through their days. It's made me strive to be a better person, a stronger teacher, an advocate for what I, too, know is right and wrong that is buried somewhere inside my grown-up persona.

SHARON YANCEY, *third-grade teacher, Department of Defense School, U.K.*

Lev Vygotsky said, "Children grow into the intellectual environment that they are in." My students have taught me that this is true. Every day my students teach me how to teach them. I teach, I watch, I listen.... I adjust my teaching to each student's individual present level...and then I nudge them forward to reach higher levels of thinking.

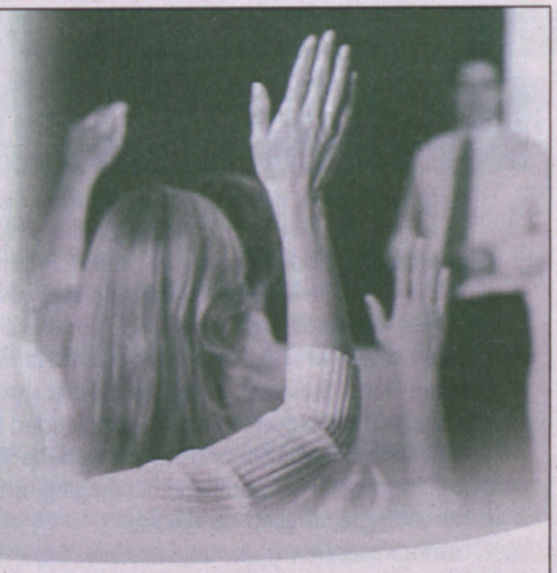
ELIZABETH STEIN
special education teacher, Smithtown, New York

We want to hear from you!

WHAT DO YOU HOPE STUDENTS WILL REMEMBER MOST ABOUT YOU DOWN THE ROAD? TELL US, IN YOUR WORDS, USING SPECIFIC EXAMPLES AND ANECDOTES, AND WE'LL CONSIDER YOUR SUBMISSION FOR AN UPCOMING ISSUE OF *NEA TODAY*. VISIT WWW.NEA.ORG/FORUMS OR E-MAIL CINDY LONG AT CLONG@NEA.ORG.

PHOTO: DAVE SANDERS

IF YOU WANT TO TEACH, LEARN TO REACH.



As an educator, your ability to engage and inspire is key to success. That's why all of Argosy University's education programs emphasize the interpersonal skills you'll need to make the grade. Because knowledge is one thing, teaching it quite another.

You can earn your Master's, Specialist, or Doctoral degree in:*

- **Educational Leadership**
- **Instructional Leadership**
- **Community College Executive Leadership**

In addition, Argosy University's 18 campuses across the country offer degree programs in Psychology, Counseling, and Business.

ARGOSY UNIVERSITY®

Learn more today at **argosy.edu** or call **800.377.0617**

Argosy University Administration | 20 South Clark Street | Suite 2800 | Chicago, IL 60603

*Program names vary by location. Not all programs or degree levels are available at every location. ©2008 Argosy University® 2428 – 1/08

NEA Teacher ToolKit™

www.neateachertoolkit.com

- Curriculum Tools
- IEP Tools
- Assessment Tools
- Grade Book Tools
- Performance Tools
- Classroom Tools

Sign Up Today!

www.neateachertoolkit.com

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Great Public Schools for Every Child

U.S. Students Trail on the Nordic Track

Students from a country without standardized testing, where teachers help make key decisions about budget and curriculum, once again grabbed global honors in a test of academic abilities.

IMAGINE THAT.

It was Finland's 15-year-olds who won the world race, according to a recent report from the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (For more results, go to page 16.)

American students ranked 25th in science and 21st in math among the 30 OECD countries (and even lower when some nonindustrialized countries are added to the mix), and scored below average in student achievement, according to the report, called the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Closer analysis however, shows that America's top students do as well as top students anywhere—it's this country's bottom students that score relatively worse.

"These findings confirm what NEA has known all along—gaps in student achievement must be narrowed in order to level the playing field so that American children will be able to compete in the global economy of the future," says NEA President Reg Weaver.

The PISA test, which is administered to 400,000 randomly selected teens around the world, differs from most American tests in that it focuses on understanding concepts and applying them to real-life situations. It is not a typical test of memorization skills, which means American students may also be at a disadvantage because "No Child Left Behind has forced teachers to teach to the test," Weaver says.

Education International General Secretary Fred van Leeuwen also urges parents and policymakers to review the PISA results skeptically. "The complexities of education cannot be reduced to sports scores," he says. And, he adds, foreign governments may be implementing education reforms with the stated objective of ranking higher on the survey.

Call it tinkering to the test.

Do you Soulja? 14

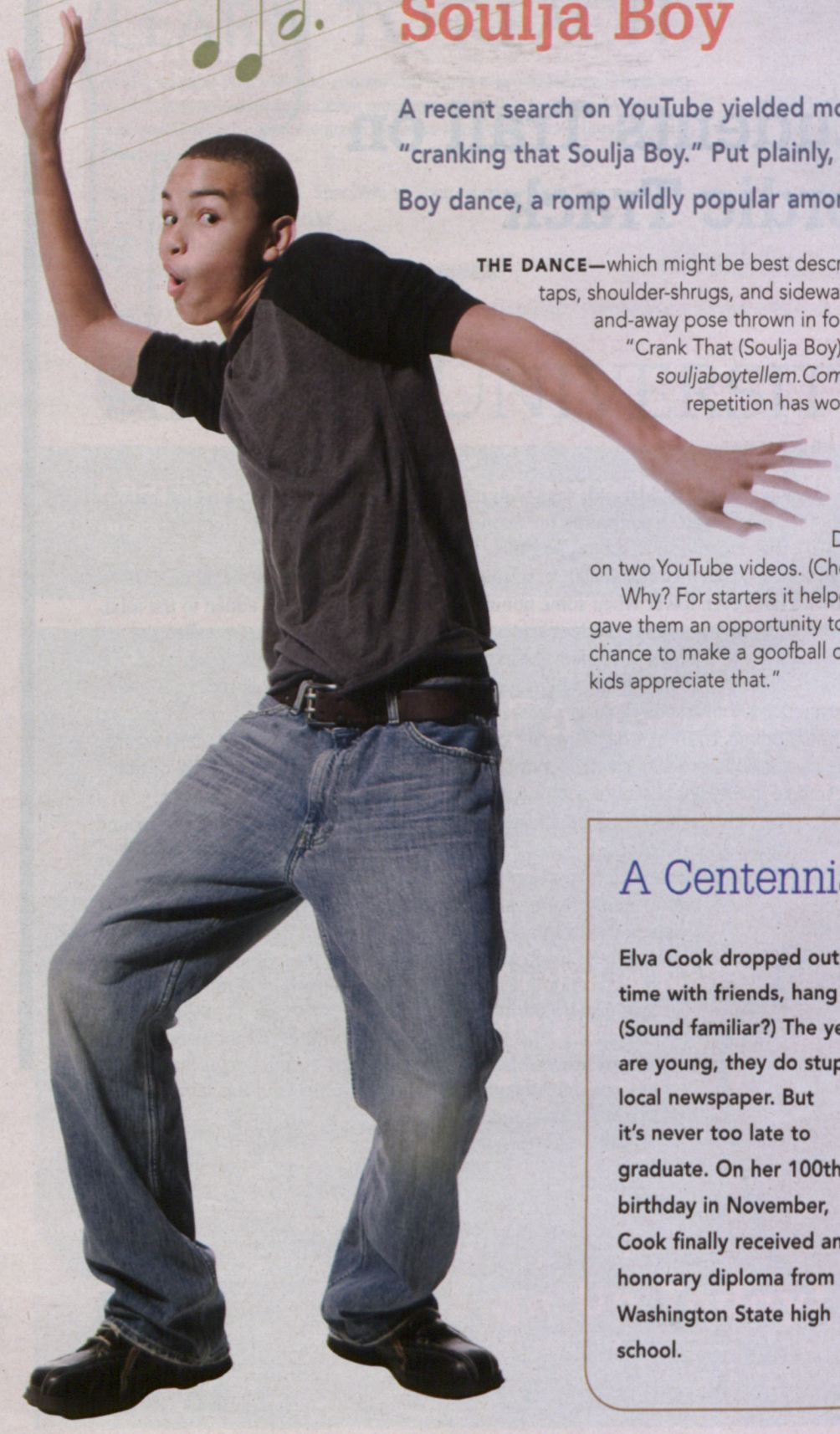
Mopping up privatization 17

Girls win 18

FOAM HAND PHOTO: MIKE FLIPPO

Teachers Crank That Soulja Boy

A recent search on YouTube yielded more than 275 videos of teachers "cranking that Soulja Boy." Put plainly, they were doing the Soulja Boy dance, a romp wildly popular among teens all over the country.



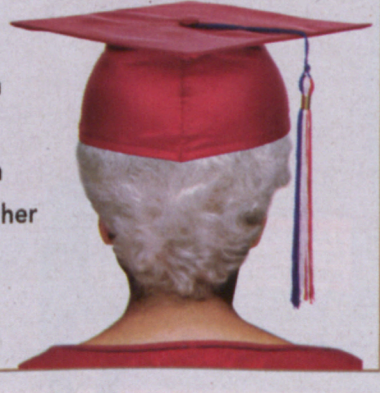
THE DANCE—which might be best described as a series of finger snaps, foot-taps, shoulder-shrugs, and sideways hops, along with Superman's up-up-and-away pose thrown in for good measure—is set to the hit single "Crank That (Soulja Boy)" by Soulja Boy Tell 'Em from his album *souljaboytellem.Com*. (As a marketing strategy, the repetition has worked wonders).

Teachers have been quick to take advantage of the dance's popularity. Russell Shedd, a music teacher at Scripps Ranch High School in San Diego, California, cranks that Soulja Boy on two YouTube videos. (Check him out at www.nea.org/ref?dance.)

Why? For starters it helped him connect with students, plus it gave them an opportunity to teach him for a change. "It was also a chance to make a goofball out of myself," Shedd says. "And the kids appreciate that."

A Centennial Celebration

Elva Cook dropped out of school to spend more time with friends, hang out with boys, and sleep in. (Sound familiar?) The year was 1925. "When people are young, they do stupid things," said Cook to a local newspaper. But it's never too late to graduate. On her 100th birthday in November, Cook finally received an honorary diploma from her Washington State high school.



DANCER: PHOTODISC, GRADUATE: CHRISTOPHER ROBBINS

Listen to the Pod People!

IN 2004, the principal of Gracie Poli's New Jersey middle school didn't want iPods in school. Poli, a media specialist, had other ideas.

Convinced of the mp3 player's potential as a learning tool for English Language Learners, Poli won school board funding for two dozen iPods and voice recorders, and used them to launch a new, after-school "Pod People Program."

"Immediately, student motivation improved," recalls Poli. "Everyone loves music and kids love iPods. We were able to fuse that with the device's tools and applications for learning English."

Three years later, Poli reports the program helped break the logjam in bilingual classes—with half moving to English-only. Meanwhile, the Pod People are spreading nationwide.

11,224

The number of **STUDENTS** along the Gulf Coast still **UNABLE TO RETURN HOME** after the 2005 hurricanes.

SOURCE: COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Defiant, but not Doomed

LITTLE JOHNNY is only in kindergarten and already picks fights, interrupts his classmates, defies your orders—you're completely worn out after a day with him. But at least now you don't need to worry so much about his academic future. It turns out, children like Johnny do just as well academically five years later as the little joys who behave themselves.

The good news comes from a study, published in the journal *Developmental Psychology,* that followed students from their first days of school through the intermediate grades, recording their math and reading skills, attention level (how well they persist at a task), and whether they were disruptive and antisocial.

Early academic skills predicted later achievement the best. Attention (or persistence) also predicted later achievement, but not as strongly. Defiance and other antisocial behaviors had little or no predictive value—quite a surprise!

GIRL WITH MP3 PLAYER: JACK HOLLINGSWORTH, DEFIANT GIRL: VLADIMIR MUCIBABIC

+ notepad

SOCIAL SECURITY FAIRNESS

While career-changers brace for a cut in pay, they often don't know that their new life in the classroom can also threaten retirement security—as architect-turned-California math teacher Peg Cagle discovered.

Cagle's Social Security benefits, which she earned as a private employee, will be substantially cut by a little known provision called the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). Another 300,000 public sector employees lose an average $3,600 a year because of its companion, the Government Pension Offset (GPO).

In January, Cagle spoke before a U.S. House of Representatives subcommittee about her career move. "I knew [it] would result in an immediate pay cut," she testified. "I did not realize, however, that I would suffer further financial penalties upon retirement. Had I been fully informed, I seriously doubt that I would have chosen...a career in public service."

The Social Security Fairness Act, which NEA supports, would fix both the WEP and GPO. For more information about the act and NEA's continued efforts to protect Social Security benefits for all of its members, go to www.nea.org/lac.

Have a great idea?

Send it by mail: *NEA Today*
1201 16th St., N.W.,
Washington, DC 20036

Send it by e-mail:
neatoday@nea.org

Anti-terrorism 101

From architecture to agriculture, almost every high school in the country has some kind of school-to-work program that aims to hook kids with relevant academics and real-life job training.

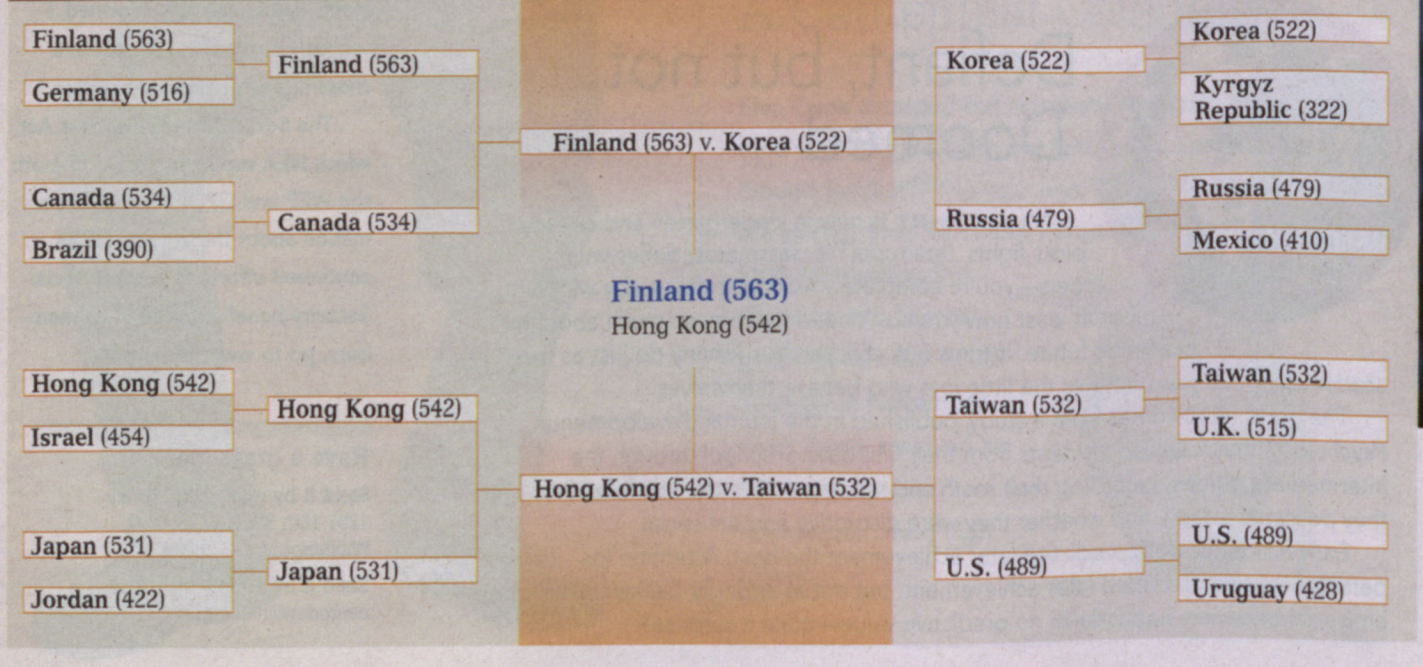
WELL, HOW ABOUT THIS ONE?

In a sure sign of the times, Maryland's Joppatowne High School has become the first in the country to consider the economics of terrorism. Students in its "Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness" magnet program, which launched this year, will choose one of three tracks: Engineering and technology, criminal justice and law enforcement, or "homeland security science."

According to the school's Web site, the homeland security industry will grow from a $40 billion business in 2004 to an estimated $180 billion industry by 2015. With the magnet program, students will have the opportunity to prepare for related jobs, and "provide services back to the community, the State and the Nation."

March Madness

FOR ALL ITS LIMITATIONS, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), a test given to teens in several countries, is still an interesting window into how the world stacks up in a few core academic areas: reading, math, and science. (China and India do not participate.) Our look at a Sweet Sixteen of Science Achievement uses the 2007 PISA mean science scores (in parentheses):



HELICOPTER: ROBDIGPHOT, SCHOOL: GEOSTOCK

46,582

The number of **STUDENTS** along the Gulf Coast still struggling with serious **MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES** after the 2005 hurricanes.

SOURCE: COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Fighting Back on Privatization

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE to squash a plan to privatize? Members of New Jersey's Hammonton Education Association (HEA) had exactly one week to put together their defense—and they did it.

On September 13, the Association learned that the school board would vote—on September 20!—on bids for private custodial services. The jobs of nearly two dozen custodians depended on their ability to quickly put together a convincing case for the status quo.

With help from state leaders and UniServ reps, local members did just that. They researched the bid specifications, collected data on the negative impact of privatization on communities, and reached out to the general community with a newspaper ad and football game flyers. On board night, hundreds of supporters attended the meeting, including the custodians and their families, and provided a striking analysis of the benefits of public employees.

"No money is worth the security of our schools," HEA President Judy Shaner told the board. "No money is worth the livelihood of our custodians. No money is worth the safety of our students."

The local's swift response made all the difference.

NEA offers resources on combating privatization in public schools, a persistent problem across the country. Go to **www.nea.org/privatization** for more information.

> global takes

FROM ANNAPOLIS TO ETHIOPIA

It has been a long, terribly hard road for our colleagues in Ethiopia, who have been fighting for better working conditions and pay for teachers—even as they've faced continued harassment and hostilities from their country's government. In January, three union leaders finally were released on bail from jail, after months spent lingering there on trumped-up charges.

In the midst of it all, Education International (EI) has been working tirelessly on behalf of the Ethiopian Teachers' Association, issuing urgent appeals and keeping up the pressure on the Ethiopian government. The latest? In February, EI officials, lead by EI President Thulas Nxesi, traveled to Ethiopia to meet with union and government officials. They were joined by Maryland State Teachers Association President Clara Floyd, who said, before her trip, "We're going with high hopes that it'll lead to some progress."

Education International is a global association of education unions, of which NEA is a founding member. For more information about their work, go to www.ei-ie.org.

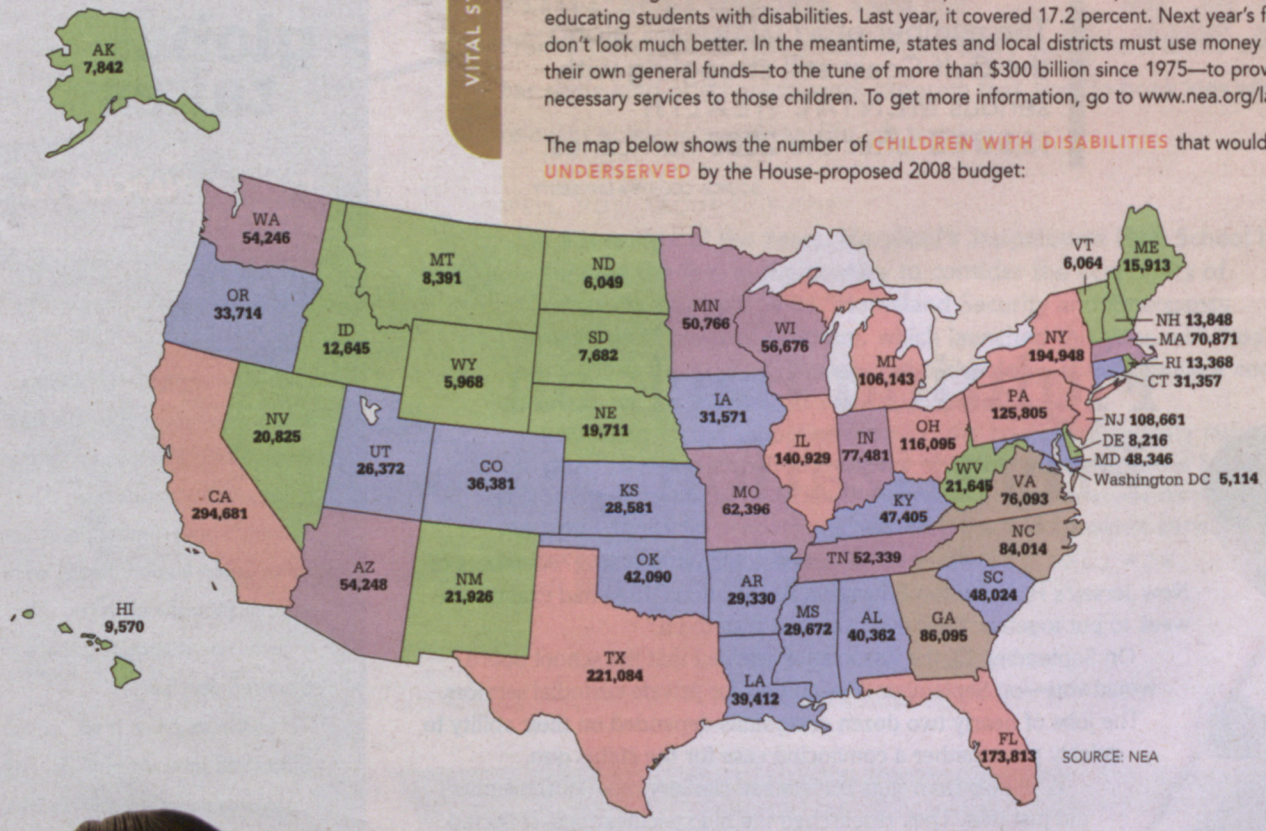
CUSTODIAN: STEPHEN COBURN, CAUTION SIGN: GROFF CREATIVE, INC.

VITAL STATS

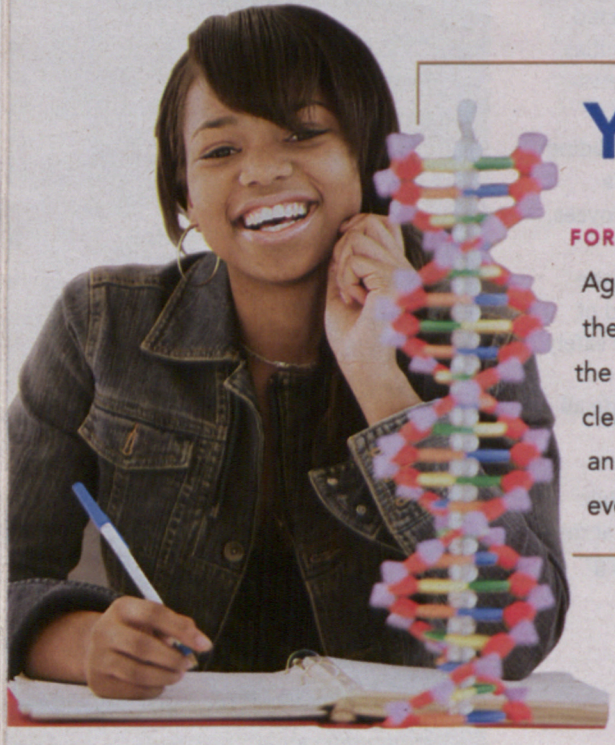
Fair Funding: That's a Good Idea!

The federal government has never fulfilled its promise to fund 40 percent of the costs of educating students with disabilities. Last year, it covered 17.2 percent. Next year's figures don't look much better. In the meantime, states and local districts must use money from their own general funds—to the tune of more than $300 billion since 1975—to provide necessary services to those children. To get more information, go to www.nea.org/lac.

The map below shows the number of CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES that would be UNDERSERVED by the House-proposed 2008 budget:



SOURCE: NEA



YOU GO, GIRL!

FOR THEIR WORK IN, ahem, "FtsZ Inhibitors as Novel Chemotherapeutic Agents for Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis," two New York girls recently won the Siemens Competition, the most coveted high school science award in the country. Meanwhile, a third girl won top individual honors, making for a clean sweep by Eve's team. "Why do people think girls can't do science?" an MIT professor asked the *New York Times*. "Where did this crazy idea ever come from?"

"We think it's time to g
the plane."

—STATE SENATOR GEOFF MICHEL
THAT THE STATE EDUCATION COMMISSIONER HAS MADE T
AND CALLING FOR MINNESOTA TO QUIT NCLB BECAUSE IT U

SCIENCE STUDENT: LWA/DANN TARDIF

Book Focus

STOLEN DREAMS

It's difficult to turn the pages of David Parker's compelling photo collection, *Before Their Time: The World of Child Labor.* Each child begs you to stay a little longer; make a difference. There's the one of a child soldier from Sierra Leone, pointing a knife at his own neck; or, the children climbing mountains of Mexican garbage, looking for food or something to sell for food; or the weary Bolivian child miners with stone dust clinging to their long eyelashes. Parker, a Minnesota physician and child advocate, began photographing child labor in 1992, sometimes posing as a buyer of shirts or carpets to gain entrance to unseen workplaces. With more than 320 million children under the age of 16 still working around the world, and 150 million of them in the most harmful industries, such as prostitution or forced military service, his images serve as an international catalog of shame. They're haunting. Riveting. In his introduction, U.S. Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) writes, "As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, 'The arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice.' It doesn't bend by itself, however; it takes persistent work by individuals like Dr. David Parker."

Q&A

Carol Burnett

ACTRESS

To celebrate NEA's Read Across America Day, taking place nationwide Monday, March 3, *NEA Today* asked Carol Burnett, star of the upcoming film *Dr. Seuss' Horton Hears a Who!* about her school days and the joy reading brings her. To find out what local schools across the country are doing to celebrate Read Across America Day, visit www.nea.org/readacross. Or, to learn more about NEA's Books Across America program, which will deliver an estimated 12,000 books and thousands of cash grants during Cat-A-Van tours, go to www.nea.org/booksacross.

Tell us about a favorite teacher and how that person shaped who you are today.

Ada Ernst was my sixth-grade teacher and every Friday for the last two hours of class she would read to us from a novel and act out all the parts. I remember her as being a great actress.

When you were a child, was there a book that you simply couldn't put down (or hear too many times)?

I loved *The Yearling* by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, also every *Arabian Nights* fairy tale and *Grimm's Fairy Tales*.

What can you tell us about your experiences as a child reader? Was there a moment when your imagination was ignited or your way of thinking changed?

The thing that ignited me was when I read the fairy tales. I'd want to draw what I was reading and I'd go to my drawing table and illustrate the stories. I thought I would grow up to be an illustrator of fairy tales.

Tell us about your experience on *Horton Hears a Who!* and why you chose to do this movie.

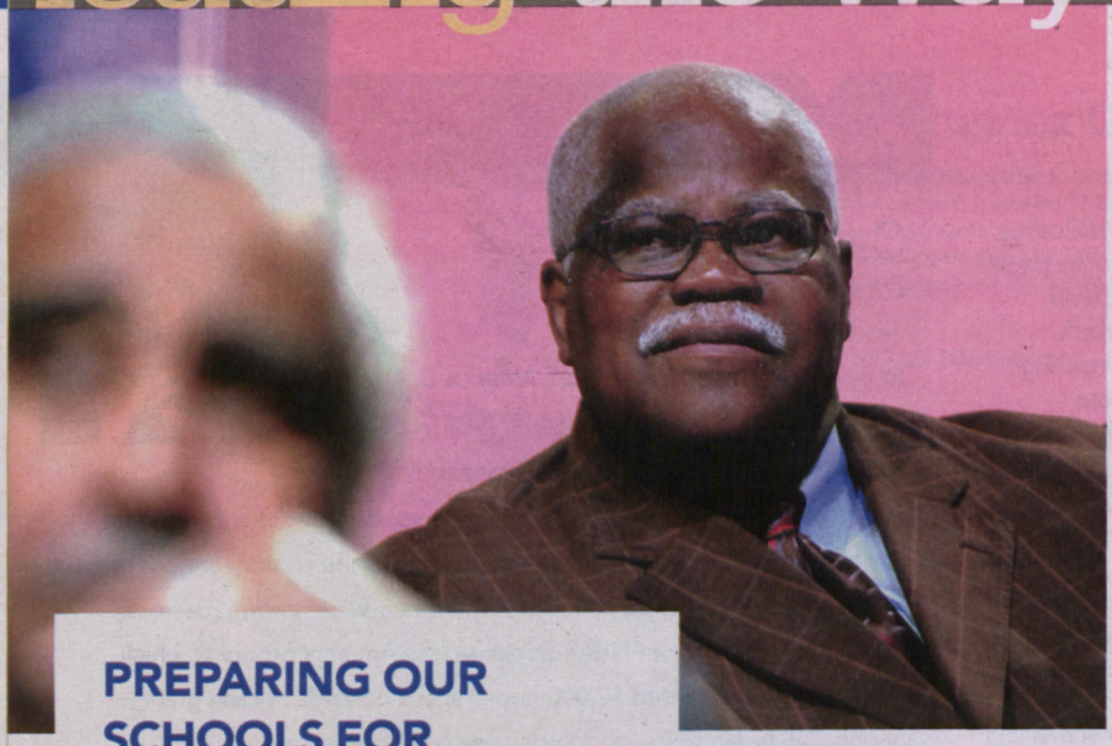
I love Dr. Seuss and the process of doing voiceover work interested me and how to make that process work for me, especially the challenge of not actually working with the other actors.

And I also wanted to do the film because I'm a huge fan of Jim Carrey and Steve Carell.

get Alice off

R-MINNESOTA, REFERRING TO THE MANY TRIPS
O WASHINGTON, D.C., FOR NCLB WAIVERS,
USURPS LOCAL CONTROL OF EDUCATION.

leading the way



PREPARING OUR SCHOOLS FOR TOMORROW'S WORLD

BY TIM WALKER

As the threat of recession looms in 2008, politicians and economists are debating how to "jump start" the sluggish economy. That may take care of the short-term picture, but what about the long-term? NEA president Reg Weaver has been telling audiences around the country that long-term solutions, risk-taking, innovation, and the ability to change and meet new challenges are key to the nation's economic future.

"What worries me most, what keeps me awake at night," Weaver said in a speech to the Wisconsin Technical College System in Green Bay, Wisconsin, last fall, "is the danger of losing our ability to compete in a new economy."

Weaver says public schools should never forget the vital role they play in shaping the nation's future, especially as they struggle to adapt to the changing world and the global economy.

The economy of the future will be dominated by industries in microelectronics, telecommunications, robotics, and biotechnology—not to mention new fields that haven't even been predicted.

"Nobody knows exactly what our economy will look like in the year 2030. But there is one thing we know for certain," says Weaver. "If we want our children to succeed and prosper in the knowledge economy of the 21st century, we must support and strengthen our public education system." Boosting our competitiveness, Weaver says, will require focused, large-scale economic investment that reflects a true emphasis on quality education.

The American people recognize that a 21st century education must incorporate a different set of skills that reflect changing economic demands, and they strongly believe that schools can and must play a role in preparing students for these challenges.

A 2007 survey by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, for example, revealed that an overwhelming 80 percent of voters say that the skills students need to learn to be prepared for the jobs of the 21st century are different from what they needed 20 years ago. And a majority of Americans also say that schools need to do a better job of keeping up with changing educational needs.

Weaver believes great public schools need innovators and risk-takers who understand that to bring quality education to every student, we must acknowledge that a one-size-fits-all education does not work.

"Our schools need to reflect the world in which our children live," Weaver says. "They need to help students become well-rounded individuals with skills to compete in a changing world and contribute to the rich, diverse societal fabric." This includes providing opportunities beyond high school and breaking down the traditional barriers between preschool, K–12, and higher education.

And in the case of those children who live in communities that are stricken by poverty and unemployment, Weaver says, we simply cannot start too soon. The glaring achievement gaps between minority students and their nonminority counterparts and the economic marginalization it creates will jeopardize the country's future economic prosperity. The disparity between the resources in urban schools, or those in rural areas, and schools in the affluent suburbs is vast.

"In the economy of the 21st century, economic success will increasingly depend on human capital," Weaver says, "and if we want to maintain our standard of living and a place of leadership in the world, we must rise to the challenge and see to it that all students benefit so that they can help keep America competitive in this new century."

Despite all the changes, the new technologies, and uncertainty in the world, Weaver told the Illinois Labor History Society in November, one irrefutable fact holds true: the labor movement and public schools have always been leaders in the struggle for equality and opportunity for all.

"That struggle must continue so we can ensure that every child in America is able to compete in the 21st century economy."

PHOTO: SANDY SCHAEFFER

PAY FOR EDUCATORS

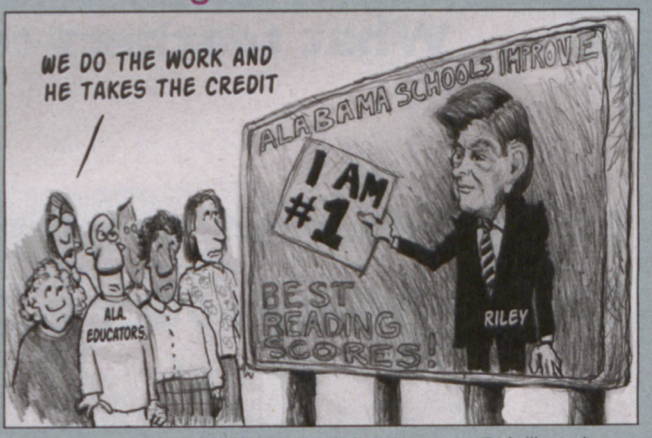
Some Shortchanged, Others May Tutor

The **West Virginia Education Association (WVEA)** and other teachers unions are challenging Gov. Joe Manchin's proposed salary increases, calling them misleading. Leaders of the American Federation of Teachers-West Virginia, West Virginia School Service Personnel Association, and WVEA say the proposed 5.5 percent salary increase is an inaccurate projection because the governor's proposal requires counties to use local share funds to cover the pay boost.

In Washington, Gov. Christine Gregoire wants to keep a record budget surplus of $1.2 billion in state savings accounts through mid-2009. **Washington Education Association (WEA)** President Mary Lindquist says she is disappointed the governor didn't use some of the surplus to make up for the pay raises the Legislature failed to give teachers in 2003–05.

And in Ohio, the CEA Foundation, a nonprofit subsidiary of the **Columbus Education Association (CEA),** is competing with more than 270 companies to offer tutoring this year through Supplemental Educational Services, a federal program under the No Child Left Behind law. Students at schools that have missed federal math and reading goals for at least two straight years are eligible. "The CEAF tutors are competent, caring, highly qualified teachers who will make sure Columbus City Schools students are competitive with their peers at large," said CEA President Rhonda Johnson. The Foundation will hire the teachers and oversee the curriculum and funds. About 13,000 students at 42 Columbus schools are eligible for free tutoring. Foundation tutors will work in the schools where they teach. Like outside vendors, the union will pay a fee to use the buildings. Tutors can earn $30 an hour.

But Enough About You...



Alabama recently plastered Gov. Bob Riley's image on 76 billboards congratulating teachers for improved test scores. Other boards feature children, but those with Riley's image have irked some educators as a misuse of tax dollars ($60,000) and because the dominating image of Riley holding a sign saying "We're number one" smacks of self-promotion instead of gratitude toward teachers.

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

Damaged, Unsafe Buses Pose Risks

Some Salem-Keizer school bus drivers in Oregon are complaining that buses damaged in a 2006 fire cause headaches, coughing, and burning noses and throats. Several drivers have taken sick leave for symptoms they attribute to the 15 buses. Six drivers have filed workers compensation claims, which were denied. In response to complaints, the buses, which were previously cleaned and tested for toxins, will be retested. "The district has worked very hard on this to resolve it," says Janet Sanders, president of the **Salem-Keizer Association of Classified Employees**. No students have reported symptoms.

Worn tires and non-functioning speedometers are included in a class-action grievance by a **Texas State Teachers Association (TSTA)** local. In addition to unsafe buses, members of the **Weslaco TSTA/NEA** documented poor restroom facilities and a hostile work environment toward employees by supervisors.

Report Card

We check out who's making the grade—or needs improvement—in education around the country.

F Central Consolidated School District

This Shiprock, New Mexico, district failed to pay NEA members increases in stipends for sponsoring or coaching extracurricular activities. Nonunion members involved in such activities received a 5 percent increase.

A Connecticut Gov. M. Jodi Rell

To rectify a $6.9 billion liability in the pension system, Rell authorized the sale of $2 billion in bonds and the full funding of the Teachers' Retirement Fund. These provisions will help ensure the security of the pension system.

F Principal Doris Alvarez

After an audit determined she likely knew of or directed more than 400 inappropriate grade changes over six years, Alvarez resigned from the Preuss School, a prestigious charter facility in La Jolla, California. She denies the charges.

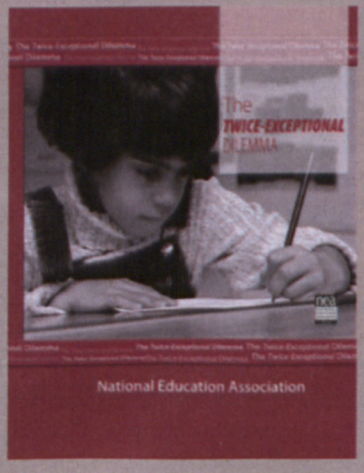
CARTOON: COURTESY OF THE ALABAMA EDUCATION ASSOCIATION; PHOTOS FROM LEFT: ART EXPLOSION; WWW.CT.GOV/GOVERNORRELL; WWW.CALIT2.NET

NEW from the NEA Professional Library!

What teachers should know . . .
What teachers can do . . .

Dinah is gifted and has a disability . . .

The *Twice-Exceptional Dilemma*



32 pp.
Item #1152-X-00-D
NEA Members $9.95
Non-members $12.95

Jack is autistic . . .

The *Puzzle of Autism*

35 pp.
Item #1148-1-00-D
NEA Members $6.95
Non-members $11.95

Purchase both books by March 1st and save $2.00!

Call 800-229-4200 and mention promotion code NEAT27
Shipping charges will be added to each order

NEA Professional Library—THE Bookstore for Educators

www.nea.org/books?n27a 1.800.229.4200

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION nea.org
Great Public Schools for Every Child

A Unique Perspective

THESE TEACHERS KNOW WHAT ADOPTED STUDENTS FACE BECAUSE THEY HAVE THEM AT HOME.

BY CYNTHIA KOPKOWSKI

When her elementary-schooler came home with an assignment to describe what his parents did the day he was born, Diana DeLauder was reminded yet again of the challenges her adopted son would encounter in the classroom.

DeLauder is one in a fraternity of parents who have unique insights on how their kids' backgrounds affect them at school: the adoptive parent is also a teacher.

There are an estimated 1.4 million adopted children ages 4 to 17 in the United States, according to the 2000 U.S. Census. Teachers like DeLauder encourage their peers to consider their own assumptions about what constitutes a family as they're planning lessons and class discussions. "As teachers, we often use what materials we're given, but so many times they have traditional mom and dad birth families," says DeLauder, who teaches high school math in Shelby, Ohio.

Broadening the definition of family for classroom purposes is crucial, says Connecticut teacher Leonilda DiTomasso in an essay published last year in *Adoptive Families* magazine. DiTomasso is the mother of twin daughters from India. Educators shouldn't assume that names have to "match" physical features. An Indian student can have the last name DiTomasso. Nor should teachers assume that an adopted child's birth family was poor or tell the student that he or she was lucky to have been adopted. Most important, "there are neither real families nor fake families," says DiTomasso, and parents with both biological and adopted children should never be asked which children are "really theirs."

When it comes to curriculum, Shelby, Iowa, high school science teacher Chris Oponski, the mother of two adopted children, says that a little tweaking of lesson plans can go a long way to making students feel comfortable and engaged. She used to do a lesson exploring inherited traits until she realized that this would exclude children like her son and daughter from full participation. "Now I preface that lesson by saying, 'We're going to look at individual traits,' and I put a positive spin on it by pointing out that these are the traits they'll pass on to their children."

When Arnette Collins' daughter had to research and create a family tree a few years ago, the Canton, Ohio, specialist for adults with mental disabilities said her daughter "stuck with the family she knew, which is our family." But they talked a bit about her biological background. "One thing that would help is when teachers talk about family units, they need to talk about how not all families are biological," says Collins. When Oponski's daughter had a similar assignment, she included a photo of the judge who finalized her adoption.

When her adopted daughter **Hope** had to create a family tree for school, **Arnette Collins** used it as a chance to talk about the child's biological and adoptive heritage.

> "When teachers talk about family units, they need to talk about how not all families are biological." —**Arnette Collins**

Keeping an eye out for behaviors that could be an outgrowth of being adopted is important, too, say adoptive parent-educators. Both Oponski and Collins saw their children's interactions at school change as they aged and as their peers started reacting differently to their backgrounds. In elementary school, children regarded Oponski's daughter's history as cool, she says. But in middle school—where conformity is key—it set her apart, and she stopped talking about it in positive terms. "Developmentally, they're working through some different things than their same-aged peers," says Oponski, who was previously a middle school guidance counselor.

In her mid-teens, Collins' daughter became more introspective after she met her birth family. Soon after that, she was further unnerved when students at school started approaching her to inform her that they were her cousins.

"There's a certain stage where these children are pondering who they are and where they come from," says DeLauder. A prepared teacher can play a valuable role in helping them feel that they've arrived in the right place. nea

PHOTO: BOB ROSSITER

MIND THE Gap

It's a high-speed, high-def, Wi-Fi world. But not for everybody.

BY CINDY LONG

Gordon Stewart, 16, has his own computer in his bedroom in Arlington, Virginia, as do his two sisters. He uses the Internet for homework, but spends hours online long after his studies are completed—if he's not chatting with his friends or updating his blog he's busy posting mash-ups to YouTube or playing elaborate, multi-partner video games.

Students like Gordon are so digitally connected it's as if they were born with their own ringtones and MySpace pages. But not everyone in "Generation Next" has access to this seemingly ubiquitous technology.

Consider Jonathen Williams. He drives almost 40 miles each day, from Wiggins, Mississippi, to Hattiesburg so he can use the Internet at a community center to research colleges and apply for student loans. He doesn't have a computer at home and doesn't have the luxury of spending hours online to explore, experiment, or express himself like Gordon.

With such limited access to computers and high-speed Internet, students like Jonathen are falling into the latest version of the digital divide—what's being called the "participation gap"—where they have fewer opportunities to develop the digital literacy necessary for an increasingly technical world. (For more on the participation gap, a term coined by MIT professor and media expert Henry Jenkins, visit www.nea.org/ref?gap.)

Students with round-the-clock, high-speed Internet access have more opportunity not only to be content consumers, but also content creators with a global audience—they have a chance to be "publishers, movie makers, artists, song creators, and story tellers," says Lee Rainie, director of the Pew Internet & American Life Project.

The more opportunity young people have to play around online, the more their experience and comfort with technology grows. They're becoming digital innovators who will increasingly integrate technology into their everyday lives and use it to shape the future—a future that will likely look a lot different for the millions of kids without the same level of experience.

According to Pew Research, there are still 30 million American households that do not have a computer, mostly in low-income or rural communities. For the majority, it's a matter of dollars and cents—a few hundred dollars for a home computer coupled with a 30 or 40 dollar monthly broadband bill isn't practical when it's a struggle to keep the lights on.

For kids in low-income households, the only place to get online is at school or at the library. Of Hispanic children, 39 percent rely on schools to use computers. Of Black children, the number swells to 45 percent, compared to just 11 percent of Asian and Pacific Islanders and 15 percent of White children.

Andrew Rasiej, who advises members of Congress on the use

It may not be scenic, but this tower atop Glendale High School brought wireless, broadband access to this rural community, creating opportunities for students **Miranda Martz** (left), **Cassandra Spangle** (seated), **Kelli McGarvey** (right), and business and technology teacher **Scott Peterson**.

PHOTO: LISA KYLE

Without the innovation and inspiration of their teacher **Brian Crosby,** fifth-graders in the desert community of Sparks, Nevada, would be left out in the digital cold. (Opposite at right) Glendale High School teacher **Scott Peterson** remained in the remote town of Flinton largely because of his school's technological resources.

PHOTO LEFT: AMY BECK; RIGHT: LISA KYLE

of the Internet in politics and policy, is an advocate for universal Internet access. "We need to think about Internet service the way we thought about phone service when we forced Ma Bell to connect everyone to a dial tone," says Rasiej, who also founded the Personal Democracy Forum to raise awareness about how the Internet is changing democracy in America.

"If we don't have universal access, we're going to leave behind a generation that is not able to participate in the 21st century global economy," he says.

In 1997, Rasiej started a program in New York City public schools called Mouse.org to introduce inner-city kids to technology and teach them how to navigate the Internet and even how to fix and maintain aging computers in their own schools. About 90 percent of the kids in the program go on to college, in areas where the average college-bound rate is less than 50 percent. "Once you hand kids access to technology and the World Wide Web, you break the chains of social and economic inequity and allow these kids to take responsibility for their own future," Rasiej says. "That's the big opportunity."

Desert Connection

Thomas Edison once said that "opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work." But when it knocked at Agnes Risley School in Sparks, Nevada, fifth-grade teacher Brian Crosby recognized that a little effort on his part would go a long way.

When the school replaced their 7-year-old Apple I-book laptops with new Hewlett Packard computers, Crosby asked for the castoffs so he could pilot a 1:1 laptop program for his students. Now Crosby uses them for all of his lessons, incorporating technology into everything his students do and learn.

More than 90 percent of children at Agnes Risely live below the poverty level and more than half speak English as a second language. Many of their parents work two or more jobs to keep food on the table—home computers and Internet services are extravagant luxuries for their richer neighbors.

For more affluent kids, using technology is like using a pencil, Crosby says. After second or third grade, they no longer think about how to hold the pencil; it's become second nature.

"But at-risk kids aren't able to use technology every day and haven't had exposure to it at home and have to play catch up to learn the technology as well as the lessons. When they're concentrating so much on the tool rather than the lesson, it costs them time and presents a steep learning curve."

Crosby was concerned that when his students went on to high school, they'd feel intimidated by the technology that many of their classmates were so accustomed to and that they'd set their sights lower as a result.

"They're less likely to go to college if they feel they don't have the same skills their classmates have," he says. "They're well aware of the technology that's out there....I wanted to bring the technology to them and expose them to it early on."

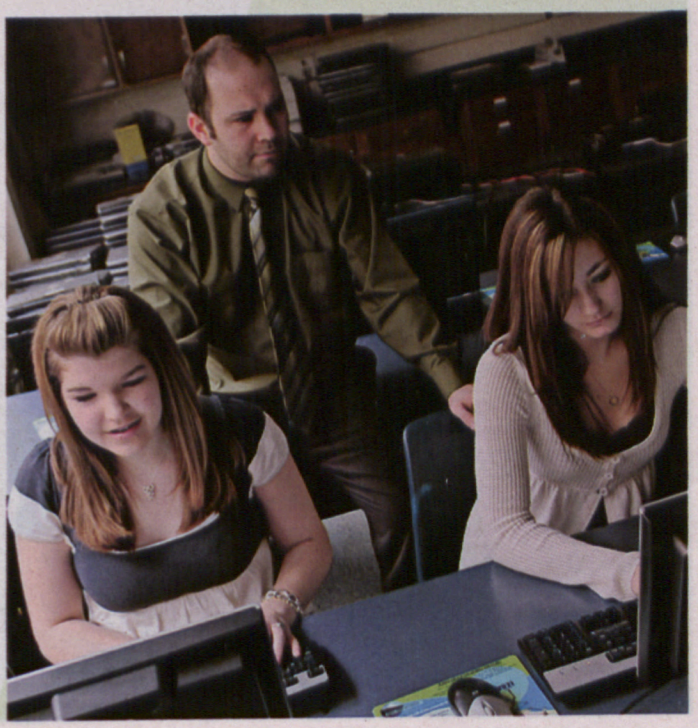
Spend a day in Crosby's classroom and you'll see kids editing wiki pages and holding Skype conferences. They blog, create digital videos, and participate in online forums, all the while developing the same literacy as any tech-savvy middle class student with 24/7 access.

"The technology allows the students to learn for themselves, which is a huge weakness for at-risk kids because we've so narrowed the curriculum for them," says Crosby. "My students are developing the mindset and skills to be thinkers and experimenters, then they can blast off into the curriculum. But first you need to make the technology accessible. Make it ubiquitous."

Transforming a Rural Community

Until recently, most residents of Flinton, Pennsylvania, had a hard time connecting to the digital world. Deep in the heart of coal country, Flinton is about as close to nowhere as you can get, according to locals. A rural, low-income community where there are more deer than people, and more people than jobs, Flinton used to be the kind of place kids dreamed of leaving someday.

But that was before BRAIN—the Broadband Rural Area Information Network—a wireless high-speed Internet network



delivering broadband access to a wide swath of rural Pennsylvania that had been left in the information dark ages by the local cable and telephone companies.

The wireless network was the idea of Dennis Bruno, superintendent of the Glendale Area School District and a forward-thinking tech advocate who recognized the ability of technology to transform a community and its young people.

Before the wireless network, residents paid nearly $40 a month for dial-up service, which was even slower than normal because of the region's antiquated phone system. Now the community pays $14 a month for a high-speed connection, much less than the typical fee for DSL or cable modems.

The network has attracted businesses and pumped up the local economy, but the most remarkable change Bruno has witnessed has been with his students. "When I first got here seven years ago, only 14 percent of them were going to college after high school," he says. "Now, 78 percent of graduating seniors go on to colleges and universities. The only difference is the technology."

Now that Miranda Martz, a junior at Glendale High School, has broadband Internet at home, she says her education doesn't end with the last bell. She continues her Spanish lessons with online tutors or logs on to collegeboard.com to practice her SAT skills, but she also spends time goofing around online—mainly, like most teenagers, on MySpace.

"We were at a major disadvantage without the technology, but now we use it all the time. It's such a huge thing in the world today—not just for school, but for everything," she says.

The wireless network has literally opened up the world to rural Flinton. Using the broadband pipeline, Bruno held a video conference with the Minister of Education in Taiwan and the Pennsylvania Secretary of Education to establish the first cyber Mandarin Chinese language program for elementary schools in the nation.

"We can't compete with large districts in terms of curriculum, but we need to be able to enrich students' education and keep pace with kids in more urban areas," says Bruno. "The equalizer is the technology."

Scott Peterson is a business and technology teacher at Glendale High. He was wary of going to a rural part of the state for his first job out of college, but thought he'd give it a try. "Seven years later, I'm still here," he says. "To be honest, the main thing that kept me here was the technology and the teaching opportunities it provides."

Peterson lives an hour away and drives through three other school districts that have no broadband access or even cable TV. "Those students are going to be left behind," he says. "With the advances that happen with technology every day, there's no catching up."

Broadband for the Bayou

Jonathen Williams is no stranger to long drives. He used to go to the public library in Wiggins, Mississippi, to use the Internet, but he had to wait in line and then sprint through his allotted 45 minutes to finish his research before his time was up. Now he drives almost an hour to Hattiesburg, where he's able to use one of 60 computers, provided by a grant from Cisco Systems, at the Harper-Wallin Family Education Center, an old Pepsi bottling plant turned computer lab and training facility. He admits that the computer center isn't the only draw to Hattiesburg—his girlfriend also lives there—but he says having unlimited Internet access to research his top university picks, look for apartments, and do some job hunting makes the drive worthwhile, whether or not he tops it off with a date.

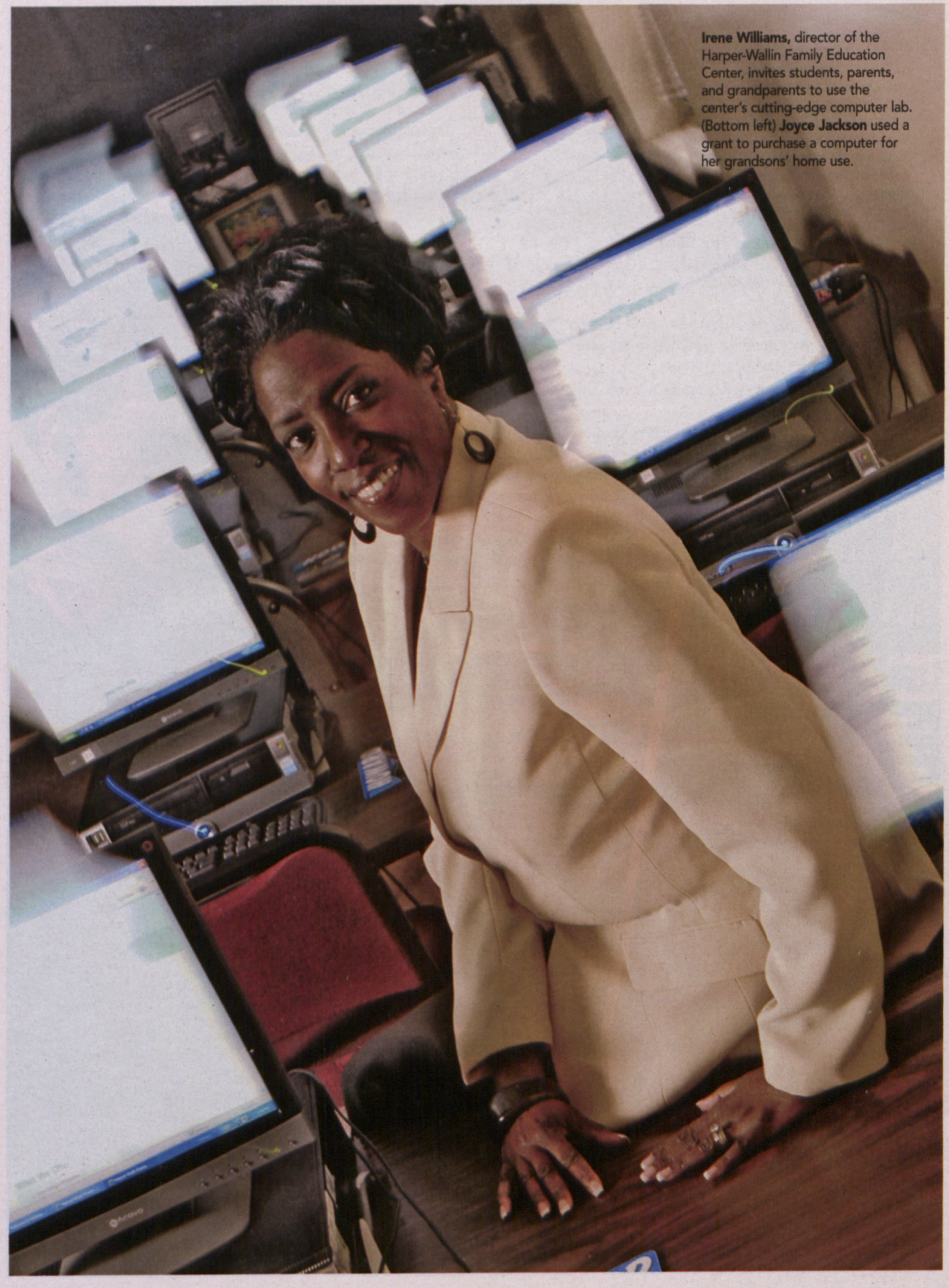
He says the best part about the lab is the unlimited amount of time he can spend online. When he's finished with his work, he logs on to his MySpace page or checks out videos on YouTube.

"I've never had to wait for a computer here, and I'm never rushed," says Williams. "It's a peaceful experience and I can do exactly what I want online, without any distractions."

The computer lab at the community center is one of a series of grants and programs from Cisco Systems that have brought thousands of Hattiesburg-area residents into the digital fold.

Hattiesburg sits at the fork of the Leaf and Bouie Rivers in the heart of southern Mississippi's pine timberlands. It's called the "Hub City" because of its central location, but nearly 90 percent of students in the Hattiesburg School District live in poverty. With a median household income of $26,821, most technology is out of reach.

"Parents recognize how important the technology is for their kids, but most can't afford home computers," says Irene Williams, director of the family center. "But now parents and grandparents bring their schoolchildren here, or they come themselves to learn about the technology so they have a better understanding of what their kids are working on."



Irene Williams, director of the Harper-Wallin Family Education Center, invites students, parents, and grandparents to use the center's cutting-edge computer lab. (Bottom left) **Joyce Jackson** used a grant to purchase a computer for her grandsons' home use.

PHOTOS: J.D. SCHWALM

For years, Northern California has been a high-tech heaven, but not for students who live in the Bay Area's low-income neighborhoods, like **Lavonda Gray** from Visitacion Valley. Now, with the help of One Economy, Gray shares her newly developed tech-savvy with her peers at the Boys and Girls club.

PHOTOS: LEO SOSA

MIND THE Gap

Joyce Jackson's grandsons call her "Sugar" and live with her part-time. Every day she brings them to the computer lab, where they get online to research homework assignments or simply surf the Web. A retired educator, Jackson knows how important reading is, and she encourages her youngest grandson, Amir, 7, to visit Mybookpal.com where he can listen to famous people read award-winning books.

She says the lab expanded access for her and her grandsons, but that she finally threw away her encyclopedia when she got a computer and high-speed Internet access at home. Through the "Affordable PC Program," a partnership with Cisco and One Economy, a nonprofit organization delivering technology to low-income people, Jackson was able to buy a low-cost PC and monitor and wire it to a broadband connection.

"It's helped them so much—they can use it for reports, science fair projects, book reports," says Jackson. "But the best part is that they've learned how to find information for themselves."

At Rowan Elementary School in Hattiesburg, principal Melvia Fountain has watched technology boost her students' digital literacy. Rowan and other schools across the district are now brimming with cutting-edge technology and are wired for speed thanks to Cisco's 21st Century Schools, a $40 million dollar technology program delivering a richer education experience to tens of thousands of low-income students in Mississippi and Louisiana.

"The presence of technology takes away the mystery—now it's every day for our students," Fountain says. "But the biggest change we've seen is in how students are taking charge of their own learning. By knowing how to access, manipulate, and evaluate information, they're building the skills necessary to become lifelong learners."

Those skills, says Andrew Rasiej of Mouse.org, are different in the information age, when almost anything anyone might want to know about is now just a click away. For the past 100 years or more, he says we've been teaching students through rote memorization. "With the Internet, all the pieces of information are readily available. The skill set students need today isn't memorization, but navigation—the ability to find what they're looking for and separate truth from fiction."

Silicon in Visitacion Valley

Knowing how to navigate the Web for information saves Lavonda Gray, a junior at the June Jordan Small School for Equity in San Francisco, a lot of time. But she wasn't always so well-acquainted with Google.

She used to have to squeeze in Internet time at the library, or after school in her teachers' offices. She didn't have time to conduct in-depth searches, let alone explore the Web for her own entertainment. But through the help of technology nonprofit One Economy, which provided a grant for a home computer and a year of high-speed Internet, she now has broadband access at home. She's also a member of the organization's Digital Connectors program, which immerses young people from underserved communities in technology training and instruction, technical support, and leadership development.

Through Digital Connectors, Gray learned not only how to navigate the Web and use different programs, but also how to troubleshoot computer problems, repair hardware, and teach others in her community about technology.

"Lavonda has been a real role model in her community, teaching people about the benefits of technology and helping them use the Internet to learn," says Leo Sosa, a One Economy staff person who works with Digital Connectors in San Francisco and around the country. "Her enthusiasm has helped encourage other youth to join the program."

Gray lives in Visitacion Valley, a tough neighborhood in San Francisco plagued by crime and poverty. One safe haven is the Boys and Girls Club, where, through the Digital Connectors program, Gray spends afternoons teaching her neighbors about technology. She was surprised to find that a lot of the kids didn't know how to use a mouse or attach a file to an e-mail.

"Technology is too big a part of our world for kids to not know the most simple stuff," she says. "That's where you find the gap—it's where kids can't go online to just mess around, find stuff, explore. Kids want to know about technology. They want to know how it all works and what it can do. It's everywhere, it's the future. Kids who can't access it, well they're just living in the past." nea

Send comments on this story to clong@nea.org.

nea.org

Find more on NEA.org

READ OUR Q&A WITH MIT'S HENRY JENKINS

The director of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Comparative Media Studies Program, Jenkins and his research team coined the term "participation gap." Read his take on how it impacts students and what educators can do.

BRIDGE THE GAP IN YOUR DISTRICT!

Find out more about Cisco and One Economy and how you can get help for students in your community.

VISIT www.nea.org/ref?gap

Discounted auto insurance for NEA members.

Shaping young minds has its rewards.

If you're insured with a big-name company like State Farm, Allstate or GEICO you may be surprised to see how much you can save. Join over 2,500 education professionals who switch to the *NEA Members Auto & Home Insurance Program* each month.

NEA members deserve the finest auto insurance protection.

- Discounted Rates – Guaranteed for a Full Year
- Multi-Policy Discount When You Insure Both Your Auto & Home
- $500 Personal Property Coverage
- New • No Deductible if Your Car is Vandalized Within 500 Feet of School Property
- Convenient Payment Plans with Summer Skip Option
- New • Identity Theft Resolution Service – FREE!

Call now for your FREE, no-obligation rate quote today.

Call toll-free 1-866-680-5141

Monday – Thurs. 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Friday – 6:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Saturday – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., M.T.

www.aplus.com/neamb

NEA Members Auto & Home Insurance Program

"Protecting America's educators for over 50 years."

Home insurance currently not available in Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi or Texas. Discount rates may not be available in Oregon, New Mexico or Tennessee.

AHNT 0308

Have you ever...

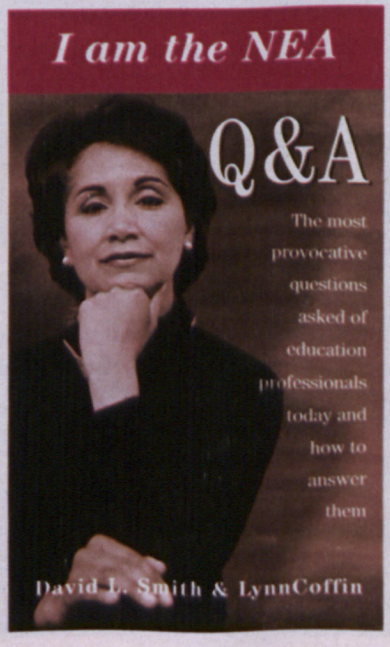
...had to defend public education? Or explain why it's important for every educator to join the Association? If so, you're not alone. But don't worry. Now you can have the answers to the most commonly asked "tough" questions right at your fingertips.

96 pp.
Item #2031-6-00-D
Nonmembers: **$12.95**
Members: **$ 9.95**

To order, contact the **NEA Professional Library** online at www.nea.org/books, or call toll-free at **800-229-4200**.

NEA Professional Library—
THE Bookstore for Educators

Shipping charges will be added to each order.


I am the NEA
Q&A
The most provocative questions asked of education professionals today and how to answer them
David L. Smith & LynnCoffin

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

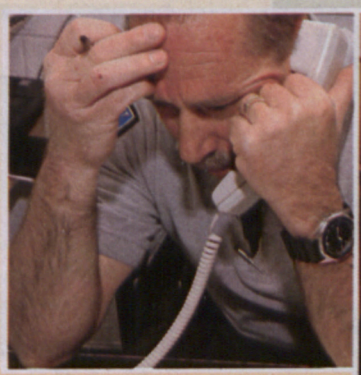
Great Public Schools for Every Child

Security Upgrade

BY JOHN ROSALES

School security: What was once left to teachers and aides who had "free time" to police hallways is now often the work of highly trained, experienced staff like Sgt. Dan Kivett, the security supervisor at East Valley High School in Redlands, California. Kivett and his crew patrol on foot and bicycle, in golf carts and vehicles. Today, most schools have emergency plans on file and security personnel in place, a trend that grew after the rash of school shootings in the 1990s. Security service personnel account for 36,000 of NEA's 480,000 education support professionals, and some school systems train ESPs serving in other roles to become security personnel. They may work security part-time, like Holly Smith and Ivy Richardson, who protect the students at Mesa Ridge High School in Colorado Springs. But whether full-time or part-time, school security guards must always be ready to respond to situations that range from bomb threats to littering, fighting, theft, and vandalism, all in the name of protecting students and the learning environment.

"I don't want to be liked or hated," says Kivett. "I want kids to look at me as fair, consistent, and approachable. That way, we can take good care of them."



TO PREPARE FOR THE DAY, Kivett finds out which teachers are absent, then briefs his six full-time and three part-time officers about the day's activities. East Valley's 3,650 students start arriving in buses around 6:30 a.m. as Kivett and his team patrol the 56-acre campus' parking lots, athletic fields, and nearby orange groves. "Students like to hide in the groves and skip first period," he says. Because school officers are not authorized to make arrests off school property or to carry weapons, they coordinate closely with local police.

SOME STUDENTS CALL KIVETT "Officer Dan," while others refer to him as "Officer Dad." "The kids know I'm going to treat them fair, even when I have to be stern," he says. After issuing one teen a citation, he says, "she loathed me." Kivett and his wife bumped into the former student while grocery shopping one day and she thanked Kivett for caring enough to intercede. "She's in college now. That's the satisfaction of this job."

PHOTOS: SUSAN GOLDMAN

THE ROUTINE: Patrolling is a preventative measure. Some of Kivett's officers have beats; all are trained in crowd control. There are 13 active gangs in the area around the school, which makes the school grounds ripe for incidents.

KIVETT SAYS HIGH-PROFILE student-on-student violence in the 1990s changed the role of school security. "We look at things a lot differently now. It's not just a kid talking anymore." Kivett says security guards used to "show up in T-shirts and jeans." Today, the use of walkie-talkies, pepper spray, handcuffs, and security vehicles are standard at many schools. "There's a preventative strategy to much of what we do," says Kivett, who is certified in drug influence recognition.

KIVETT SAYS HE ONCE discovered a student's wallet chain was from a chainsaw. "He didn't know it could be used as a weapon," Kivett says. As a deterrent, nothing beats the drug dog. "They know the dog can show up at any time and sniff out drugs, gun powder, sulphur...a wide variety of substances," says Kivett, who maintains a permanent display of confiscated items in his office for instructional purposes, though most are turned over to the sheriff's office or the district.

IVY RICHARDSON AND HOLLY SMITH first joined the school district as custodians, nine and 14 years ago, respectively. For the past five years, Richardson (pictured above) has spent half the day cleaning as a custodian and the other half monitoring school grounds as a security guard.

PHOTOS TOP LEFT AND BOTTOM LEFT: SUSAN GOLDMAN; ALL OTHER PHOTOS: JERILEE BENNETT

SECURITY TRAINING emphasizes prevention. "We're taught how to read the signs when students might start fighting," says Smith. In six years, Smith has witnessed about eight fights. "I try to make a loud sound to get their attention and to control the crowd. If you can get the crowd to back up, instead of egging them on, then the fighters usually stop fighting." Richardson takes solace in knowing she has backup. "We all work together for the benefit of the students, to create a safe environment for learning," she says.

SMITH, ONCE A NIGHT custodian, enrolled in her district's Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) workshop in order to apply for daytime work as a security guard-custodian. She often uses the golf cart to patrol the parking lot, where students sometimes "accidentally" park in teachers' spaces. "My favorite part of the job is building relationships with the kids," Smith says. Richardson also uses the golf cart to patrol those trails around campus favored by smokers.

Just the Facts

85% of school security guards work in school buildings—44% at high schools; 27% at middle or junior high schools; 14% at preschool, kindergarten, or elementary schools. The remaining guards work at multiple levels or district central offices.

84% work full-time.

42% are male.

63% have attended at least some college.

60% have met specific job requirements such as certifications or special courses.

23% must take examinations or courses on a regular basis.

48 average age

Various security levels—School Resource Officers are usually local or county law enforcement officers. School police departments are regular law enforcement entities that work for, and are paid by, the school district. Hall monitors are often paraprofessionals who perform security functions in addition to administrative duties.

DATA SOURCE: NEA RESEARCH

SEND COMMENTS ON THIS STORY TO JROSALES@NEA.ORG.

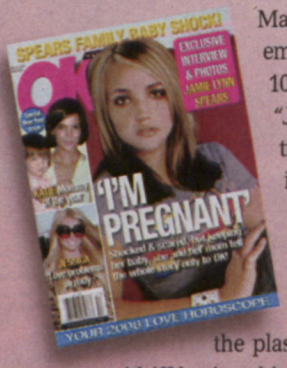
nea.org

SEE MORE ON-THE-JOB PHOTOS OF NEA'S FINEST IN OUR SLIDESHOW: WWW.NEA.ORG/REF?SECURITY.

Lolita in the classroom

DOLLS IN FISHNETS, HAIR EXTENSIONS FOR KIDS, AND POLE-DANCING TWEEN TV STARS. GIRLHOOD ISN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE, AND THAT MEANS TEACHING GIRLS ISN'T EITHER.

BY CYNTHIA KOPKOWSKI



Maybe it was when stores began stocking thongs embroidered with "wink, wink" in sizes for 7- to 10-year-olds, to be covered by sweatpants with "Juicy" stitched across the rear. That's about the time it became apparent that there is less sand in the hourglass for girlhood than there used to be. Or it could have been when teen magazines featured a Skechers footwear ad with popstar Christina Aguilera dressed as a schoolgirl in pigtails with bra exposed. Or perhaps it was the plasticized proliferation of Bratz dolls, with their midriff-baring shirts and fishnet stockings, marketed to little girls.

Although it would be nice to think that educators don't have to worry about our culture's sexualization of younger and younger girls—to assume it is parents', Hollywood's, or Madison Avenue's problem—there's no keeping the effects out of the classroom.

"Sexualizing childhood is diverting students from the kind of learning we want them to do," says Diane Levin, researcher and author of the forthcoming *So Sexy So Soon: The New Sexualized Childhood and What Parents Can Do To Protect Their Kids*. "With [the No Child Left Behind law's] emphasis on high-stakes testing and the narrowing of the curriculum, there's less time for teachers to address a whole range of issues in children's lives."

It's not easy growing up in a sex-saturated culture. Research linking sexualization to eating disorders, depression, and low self-esteem is outlined in last year's report from the American Psychological Association Task Force on the Sexualization of Girls. So far sexualized childhood has been understood as a social problem and is rarely discussed as something diminishing learning.

Educators on the front lines trying to teach young girls about the damaging influence of media and advertising face tough competition. Celebrity rules in the minds of many young girls today, and what they see on screen, be it TV or computer, is powerful.

On the E! television network's *Keeping Up With the Kardashians*, star Kim Kardashian giggles as her preteen sister demonstrates a move on a stripper pole installed in one of the house's bedrooms. Over on the CW, the teens in *Gossip Girl* banter frequently about sex. The show was routinely the top-rated among children ages 12–17 last season. And the girls themselves can become the celebrities, thanks to sultry cell phone self-portraits uploaded to Facebook and MySpace. At the same time, advertising, which was a $20 billion industry in 1979, is now a $250 billion juggernaut.

Pressure on girls now is "totally different," than in previous decades, says Levin. "Kids have always wanted to learn about sex. But what's changed is where they are getting their information from. It's the media—four to six hours a day on screens where marketing to children has become a huge industry and sex is used."

That plays out in the classroom, says Earlene Spencer, a special needs teacher at E.A. Laney High School in Wilmington, North Carolina. "The role of pop culture and what those people are doing is not what we should have to be worried about in the classroom, but we are." Young females she interacts with now seem more unstable emotionally and under greater pressure to have sex than when she started teaching 19 years ago, says Spencer. "It is absolutely harder to be a girl in school now."

Colleague Wes Knape, the school's drama teacher agrees. "You've got pop culture saying it's acceptable to do these things at this age, but pop culture is not there to help you in the classroom."

Even pregnancy is starting to lose a bit of its stigma. Pregnant girls in Knape's class chatter excitedly about their impending motherhood and baby showers. No wonder then that the day after Britney Spears' 16-year-old sister Jamie Lynn Spears announced on the front cover of *OK!* magazine that she was pregnant in December, CNN ran the headline, "What will you tell your kids?"

So what's an educator to do?

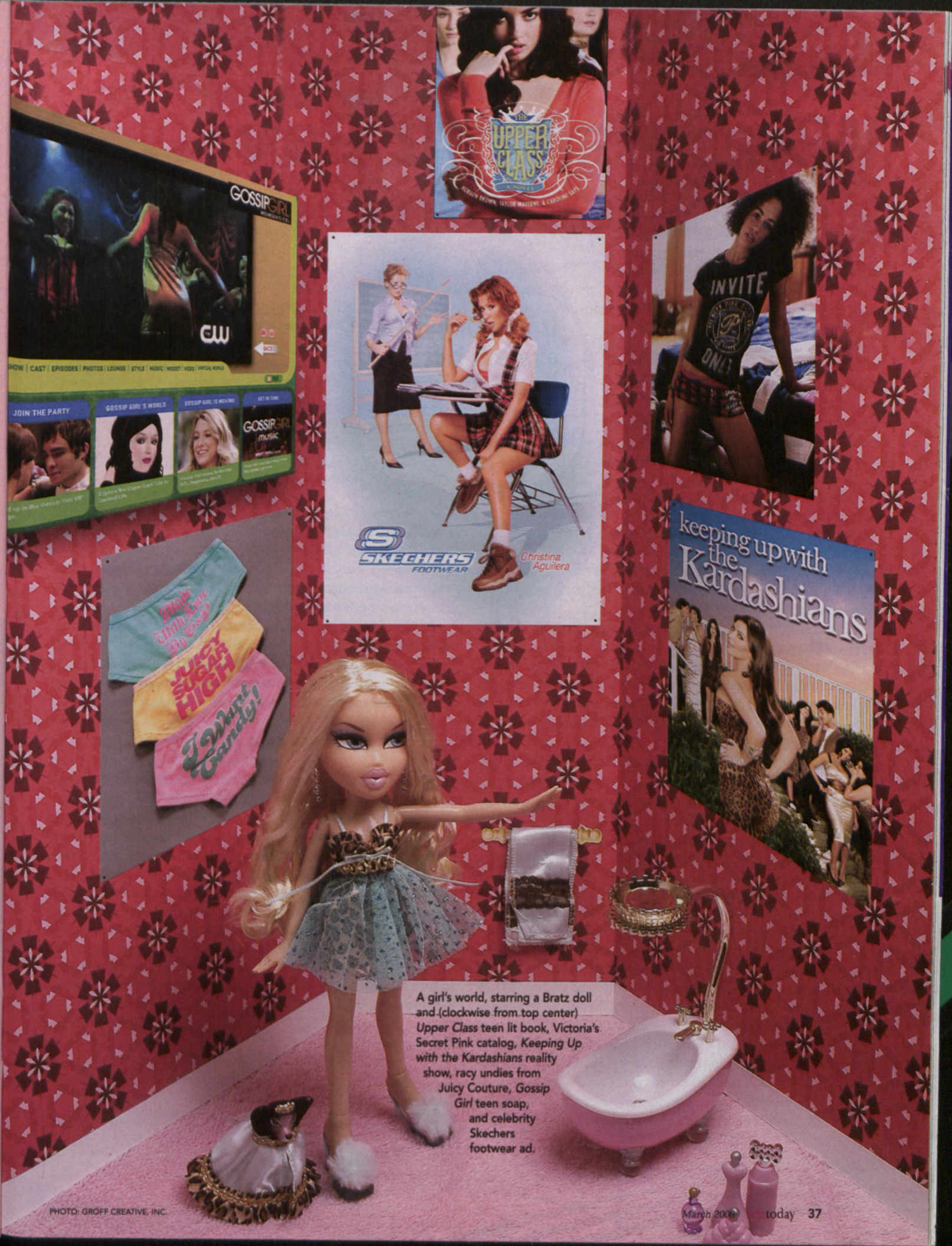
START BY SETTING A GOOD EXAMPLE, say fellow educators who are concerned by what they view as some colleagues' inappropriate clothing choices. "We need to start by talking to student members about the importance of their own dress," says Vielka Elvebak, a member of NEA's Women's Caucus.

SUPPORT DRESS CODES FOR STUDENTS. Spencer and Knape say their fellow staff members are wholeheartedly backing a move by the district to institute uniforms and dress regulations. "Anything that distracts from learning needs to go," says Spencer.

RATHER THAN IGNORING THEM, be prepared to respond to specific situations as they arise—a child dressing inappropriately or talking about sexual behavior. "Teachers talking with students, really connecting with them, can help counteract the negative lessons kids are learning about relationships and personal behavior," from other sources, says Levin.

CONSIDER HOLDING SEMINARS FOR PARENTS on the topic. Teachers like Spencer and Knape would like to see at least one per year. "We need to tell society that we are not the family," says Spencer. Instead, "We need to get to mama." nea

Send your comments on this story to ckopkowski@nea.org.



A girl's world, starring a Bratz doll and (clockwise from top center) *Upper Class* teen lit book, Victoria's Secret Pink catalog, *Keeping Up with the Kardashians* reality show, racy undies from Juicy Couture, *Gossip Girl* teen soap, and celebrity Skechers footwear ad.

PHOTO: GROFF CREATIVE, INC.

Where is Your Pay Plan Heading?

BY MARY ELLEN FLANNERY AND ALAIN JEHLEN

What do you think about merit pay?

Hate it! Of course!

Unless, perhaps, you don't...unless, perhaps, it means a series of pay incentives to encourage you to teach in the poorest schools, or a system of rewards for professional development that gets you thinking about curriculum, planning parent outreach events, or conducting classroom research.

Then it gets complicated, no?

Talk about hot button issues, talk about the elephant in the room, merit pay is like a pachyderm on fire these days. Republicans, Democrats, governors, legislators, presidential candidates, and school board members all are advocating for changes in teacher pay. Turn on talk radio. Flip to the opinion pages in your newspaper. This is an issue that simply can't be ignored.

If your salary system hasn't been shaken up yet, it will be.

Already, according to NEA research, at least 36 states plus the District of Columbia have some sort of "alternative compensation" systems in place. And more are certainly on their way. That's why it's important for all NEA members to arm themselves with information and resources on the subject. Know what to embrace. Know what to avoid. And know, above all else, that your voice should be heard before anybody changes your pay.

"Information is power," says NEA President Reg Weaver. "While we can be open to alternatives, we should always oppose politically motivated, quick fixes designed to weaken the voice of teachers and the effectiveness of education employees.

"If they want to talk about changing the way we're paid, they need to do that with us, not to us."

PUT THE BRAKES ON

When the new superintendent of Cambridge, Massachusetts, schools first came to town, he found a school committee quite interested in merit pay. So, to illustrate how it might work (or not), the superintendent, Thomas Fowler-Finn, showed his principals and curriculum coordinators a 15-minute video of a teacher at work. He then asked them to rate her performance from 1 to 10.

"I got a couple of 2s, a 3, several 4s and 5s—the entire spectrum, right up to a 10," he says. With that, they decided those kinds of ratings wouldn't make a very solid basis for paying people.

Like the gentleman from Cambridge concluded, traveling the road of "merit pay" or "alternative pay" can be dangerous. (See our glossary on page 41 for a quick vocabulary lesson.) There are plenty of potholes out there that can swallow an educator's paycheck. But basically, according to NEA's compensation experts, there are three things to avoid:

PAY BASED ON SUBJECTIVE EVALUATIONS. Instead, NEA believes evaluations should be used to improve the practice of teaching and student learning.

PAY BASED ON STUDENT TEST SCORES. Students, parents, and teachers would be a lot better served if scores were used to help teachers improve their practice, school curriculum, or other learning conditions.

EXTRA PAY FOR TEACHERS IN HARD-TO-FILL SUBJECTS. This kind of idea leads to trouble and the thinking that some types of teachers are more valuable than others, NEA believes.

To Okaloosa County, Florida, fifth-grade teacher Karen Peek, the whole idea of pay for performance is an insult. "I love my work and I do the best job possible every day. You could offer me $2 million and I couldn't do it better. Give me a raise—that would be great—but don't imply that I am holding back and not doing the best I can now."

GREEN LIGHT MEANS GO!

Thinking about ways to get more money to educators isn't such a bad thing. Yes, of course, you love the children; it's a noble profession; and you are making the world a better place. But you can't get paid a decent wage for that? Nearly half of new teachers leave the classroom during the first five years of teaching—and, although the reasons are varied, low pay is certainly one of them.

NEA supports at least a $40,000 salary for all teachers, and it celebrates the wins of its affiliates who have climbed even higher. (Since 2006, an increasing number of New Jersey school districts have adopted $50K as their base salary. Go Jersey!) It also supports compensation systems that encourage the kinds of things that actually improve teaching and student learning—like skills, knowledge, and experience. Those systems might include:

ADDITIONAL PAY for National Board Certification or advanced degrees.

ADDITIONAL PAY for taking on the role of mentor to newer colleagues, or for gaining new knowledge through professional development or experiences.

INCENTIVES TO ATTRACT caring and qualified teachers to hard-

to-staff schools. (Local teachers would know best how to provide those incentives or how much money it might take to be effective.)

"Through our plan, we're developing a learning community," says Maureen Gunderson of Le Center, Minnesota, where bonuses are earned mostly from working with colleagues to improve practice.

But what works in rural Minnesota might not work in Jersey City or Manitowoc, Wisconsin, and vice versa. While there are basic principles that hold true everywhere—for example, pay based on test scores is a bad idea on both coasts and all the places in between—you'll know what's best for you and your colleagues.

Whatever it is, NEA and your state affiliate can help you get it. Go to www.nea.org/ref?pay for more information. Check out the box on page 41 for other resources. And read on for examples of the pluses and minuses of far-ranging plans from Portland, Maine, to Houston, Texas. nea

FLORIDA

When former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush signed into a law a merit-pay plan called STAR (Special Teachers Are Rewarded), who knew that the spotlight would be shined on thousands of teachers who simply said no to the test-driven bonuses? Last year, it was repealed by the Florida Legislature and replaced with a new model.

THE OLD STAR SYSTEM was funded with $147.5 million by the state Legislature to provide 25 percent of the state's teachers with 5 percent bonuses. Each district was supposed to negotiate its own plan with local Associations, but the state required them to be based on test scores. In many districts, teachers just walked away.

"So much of what teachers do isn't reflected in test scores."

—Escambia County science teacher Cathy Boehme

IN 2007, STAR WAS REPLACED by MAP (Merit Award Program). Teachers hoped it would be better because it does allow districts to look at improvement rates, but bonuses must be based on very complicated actuarial tables developed by a state contractor. And it still doesn't appear as if the state will consider other activities.

IN ESCAMBIA COUNTY, for example, a proposed plan added incentives for community involvement, professional development, and leadership. The state rejected it—and now it appears as if fewer than 10 Florida districts will sign on.

NEW YORK CITY

Last October, the mayor, schools chief, and union leaders in the nation's biggest school system announced they had bargained a pay-for-performance plan about which they could all be enthusiastic.

THE PROGRAM DOES NOT replace the existing salary schedule. It adds bonuses.

SCHOOLS QUALIFY FOR BONUSES if students meet targets for raising test scores.

THE BONUS GOES TO THE whole school, not individuals. A committee—the principal, a principal's designee, and two representatives elected by union members—decides how to divvy up the money among the staff.

THE SCHOOL'S TOTAL BONUS equals $3,000 times the number of union-represented educators.

THE PROGRAM IS VOLUNTARY in the sense that schools only take part if 55 percent of union members and the principal vote to opt in.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS also agreed to support pension improvements for all teachers.

"This shuts the door on the individual merit pay plans that I abhor." **—United Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten**

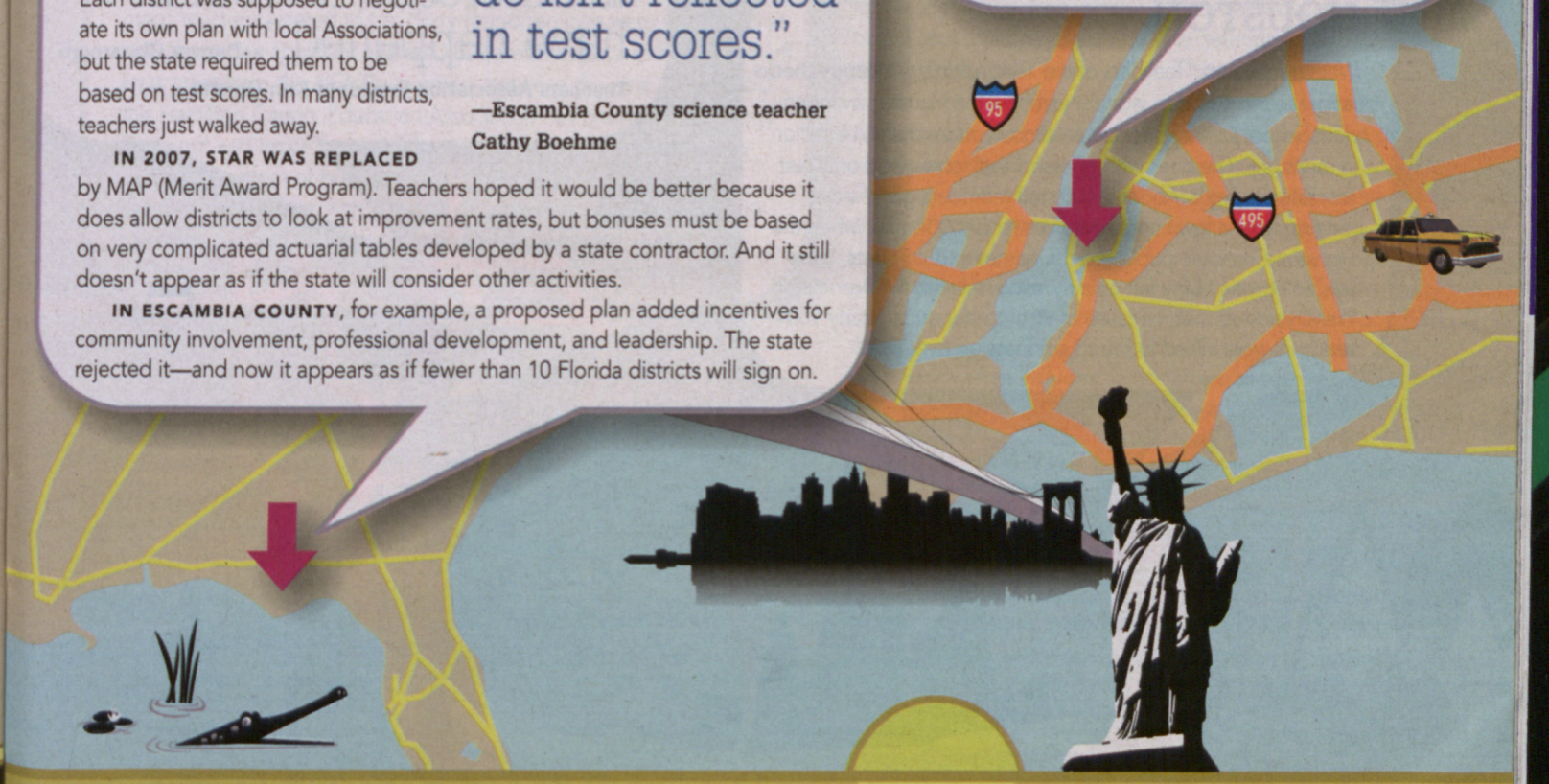


ILLUSTRATION BY GROFF CREATIVE, INC.

EAGLE COUNTY, COLORADO

The ski area around Vail, Colorado, is a leading example of the Milken Family Foundation's Teacher Advancement Program (TAP). Milken says teachers should vote on joining TAP, but here, according to Jason Glass, the district's new human resources director, "It was forced on the teachers, and we're still healing that." A teacher-administrator committee is working on changes.

THE SYSTEM REPLACED the salary schedule.

A TAX INCREASE helped pay for it.

ABOUT HALF OF A TEACHER'S annual raise depends on evaluations by principals and master teachers. Glass says there's a subjective element, despite efforts to get all evaluators on the same page.

THE REST OF THE RAISE depends partly on the school's test scores and partly on the score growth for a teacher's own students.

THE SCORE CALCULATIONS use a secret formula devised by researcher William Sanders. "The complexity is daunting to folks," says Glass. "They're not sure how their raise is calculated. We have to make it more clear." But he's committed to making pay-for-performance work.

UNION LEADER TODD HUCK says the district has trouble finding enough respected, experienced teachers willing to evaluate their peers, even though master teachers are paid extra.

DENVER

In 2005, Denver became the first big-city school system to buy into pay-for-performance with a complex system called "ProComp." Teacher approval was contingent on voters passing a $25 million tax increase, enough for an average of $6,000 per teacher.

THE PLAN WAS BARGAINED, not imposed, after a union-management pilot project.

IT IS OPTIONAL FOR TEACHERS ALREADY in the system, mandatory for new hires.

IT REPLACES THE OLD SALARY SCHEDULE. There are no seniority steps.

THE EXTRA MONEY GOES TO INDIVIDUALS, but there's no limit on how many teachers can get raises at a school, so colleagues are not competing.

THE BIGGEST RAISES ARE FOR GRADUATE degrees and extra courses. Teachers can also qualify for more money by getting good evaluations from principals, by working in schools or fields in which there is a shortage of candidates, and for helping their students meet test score goals.

TEST SCORE GOALS ARE NOT one-size-fits-all. They are negotiated, case-by-case, between teachers and principals.

"Don't try this at home. Without the $25 million tax increase, it wouldn't have happened." **—Denver Classroom Teachers Association President Kim Ursetta**

HOUSTON

When respected "Teachers of the Year" didn't get bonus checks last year, many had to wonder just how the Houston Independent School District decided to allocate more than $14 million in merit pay. The ones who guessed test scores (and only test scores) were right. About 7,400 staff members got checks, ranging from a few hundred dollars to $7,000—and, when the *Houston Chronicle* published the names and amounts, there was an uproar. Many felt unfairly left out. Later, the Associated Press reported that, because of a computer error, nearly 100 teachers were asked to return amounts up to $2,790.

MANITOWOC, WISCONSIN

In 1999, this small Wisconsin district led the way for effective salary reform with a collective bargaining agreement designed to attract and retain great teachers. Instead of the traditional "bachelor's" and "master's" lanes, Manitowoc teachers move up when they complete certain activities, like earning academy credits or National Board Certification. Since then, their turnover rate has fallen by half, and a quarter of their teachers take academy classes every year. Said nationally certified third-grade teacher Sandra Maedke: "We do have a great pay plan incentive here in Manitowoc. That, of course, cannot be the only incentive for taking on such an intensive and rigorous challenge as the National Boards—but it helps."

PORTLAND, MAINE

The Portland (Maine) Education Association recently transformed its experience-based salary scale into a new system that puts a premium on teacher-directed professional learning and experience.

INSTEAD OF ADVANCING IN PAY through the years, teachers earn more by obtaining professional development of *their choosing*. Such things might include conducting classroom research, handling a parent involvement program, developing curriculum, presenting at a conference, grant-writing, and more. "It allows incredible opportunities to tailor your own professional development," says chief negotiator Gary Vines, a high school guidance counselor.

AND IT'S WORKING. During the past 18 months, the 675 members have submitted more than 60,000 hours of learning. That's more money for them—and better learning opportunities for kids, too. "The best indicator of student learning is teacher learning," Vines says.

CHATTANOOGA

Just a few years ago, Chattanooga's urban schools weren't where many teachers wanted to be. (Sixty-four open jobs were advertised in one year—one applicant applied.) But a vibrant partnership, kicked off by a grant from the NEA Foundation, between the nine schools and the Hamilton County Education Association has brought new energy. To recruit and retain great teachers, their negotiated contract now includes a system of bonuses, which include $5,000 recruitment bonuses for teachers with a record of improving test scores; $5,000 retention bonuses for high-performing teachers; and $1,000 team bonuses for all school employees at a school with high scores.

GLOSSARY

Merit pay: The older term for rewarding teachers, often based on subjective evaluations by principals. The potential for favoritism gave this term a bad reputation among educators.

Pay-for-test scores: Rewarding teachers on the basis of student test scores or growth in test scores.

Pay-for-performance: An alternative word for "merit pay," which often includes rewards for either subjective evaluations or student test scores.

Single salary schedule: A traditional table that relies on the number of years' experience and education credentials to determine pay.

Shortage areas: Disciplines or specialties for which there may be few qualified applicants, such as math, science, reading, English for language learners, special education, and some foreign languages.

Hard-to-staff schools: Schools that have reputations for posing extra hard challenges to teachers and typically few applicants for jobs. Often, these are schools with high percentages of poor, minority students.

ON THE WEB

Read more about these new pay plans, and find out how you can get involved in the fight for professional pay for teachers and a living wage for all education support professionals, at www.nea.org/ref?pay.

ILLUSTRATION BY GROFF CREATIVE, INC.

WE'RE GOING ON A BEAR HUNT!

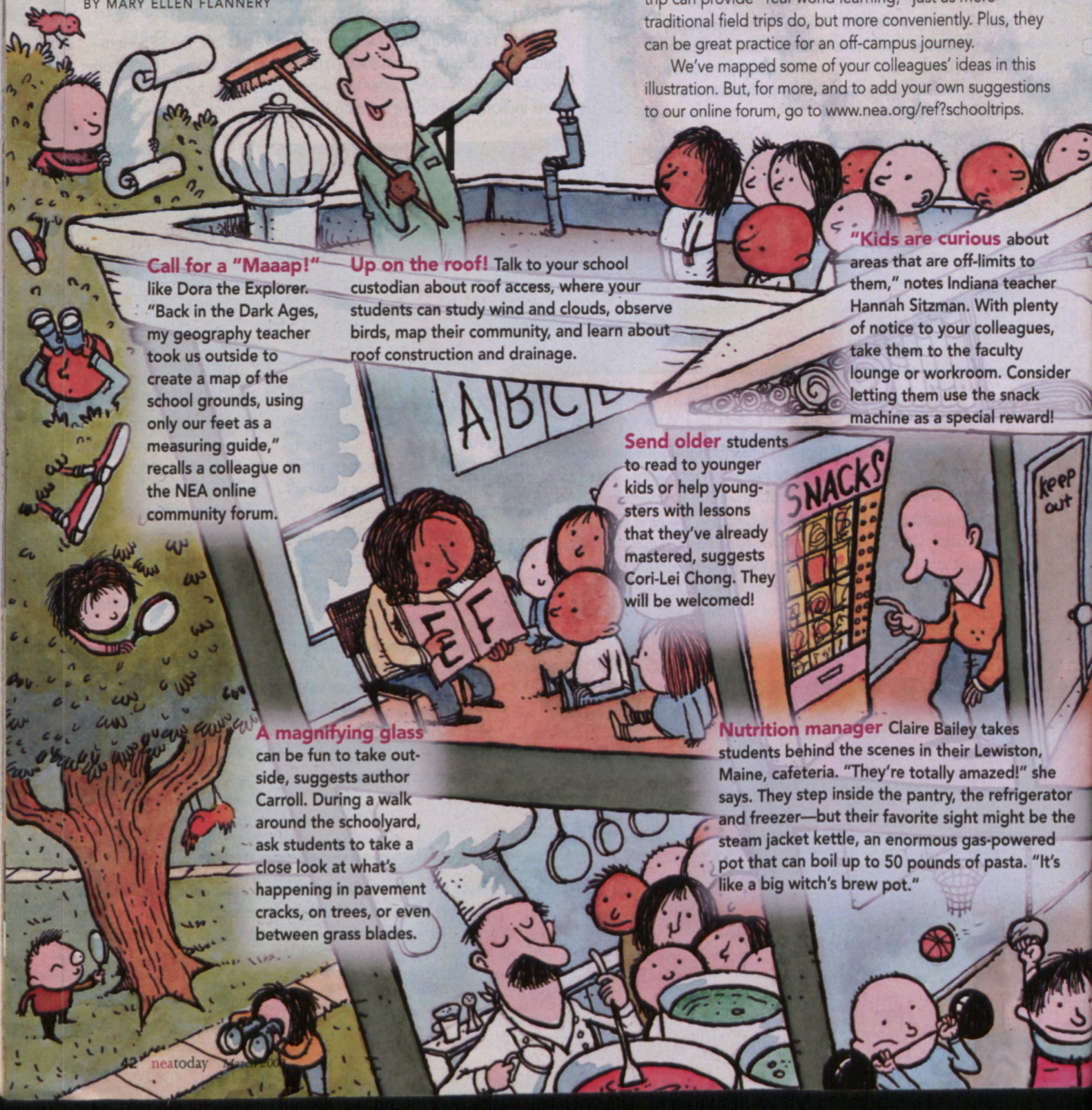
And we don't need to rent a bus. An idea-inspiring jaunt may be just beyond the front door.

BY MARY ELLEN FLANNERY

Everybody loves a field trip. But it's not always necessary to collect cash, call for parent volunteers, hire a bus, pack lunches, and issue that classic command for good behavior: "You are the ambassadors of our school!"

It's possible to go on a learning adventure without actually leaving your school campus. (And it's a lot less expensive and time-consuming.) In her book, *A Guide to Great Field Trips*, author Kathleen Carroll says an on-campus trip can provide "real-world learning," just as more traditional field trips do, but more conveniently. Plus, they can be great practice for an off-campus journey.

We've mapped some of your colleagues' ideas in this illustration. But, for more, and to add your own suggestions to our online forum, go to www.nea.org/ref?schooltrips.



Call for a "Maaap!" like Dora the Explorer. "Back in the Dark Ages, my geography teacher took us outside to create a map of the school grounds, using only our feet as a measuring guide," recalls a colleague on the NEA online community forum.

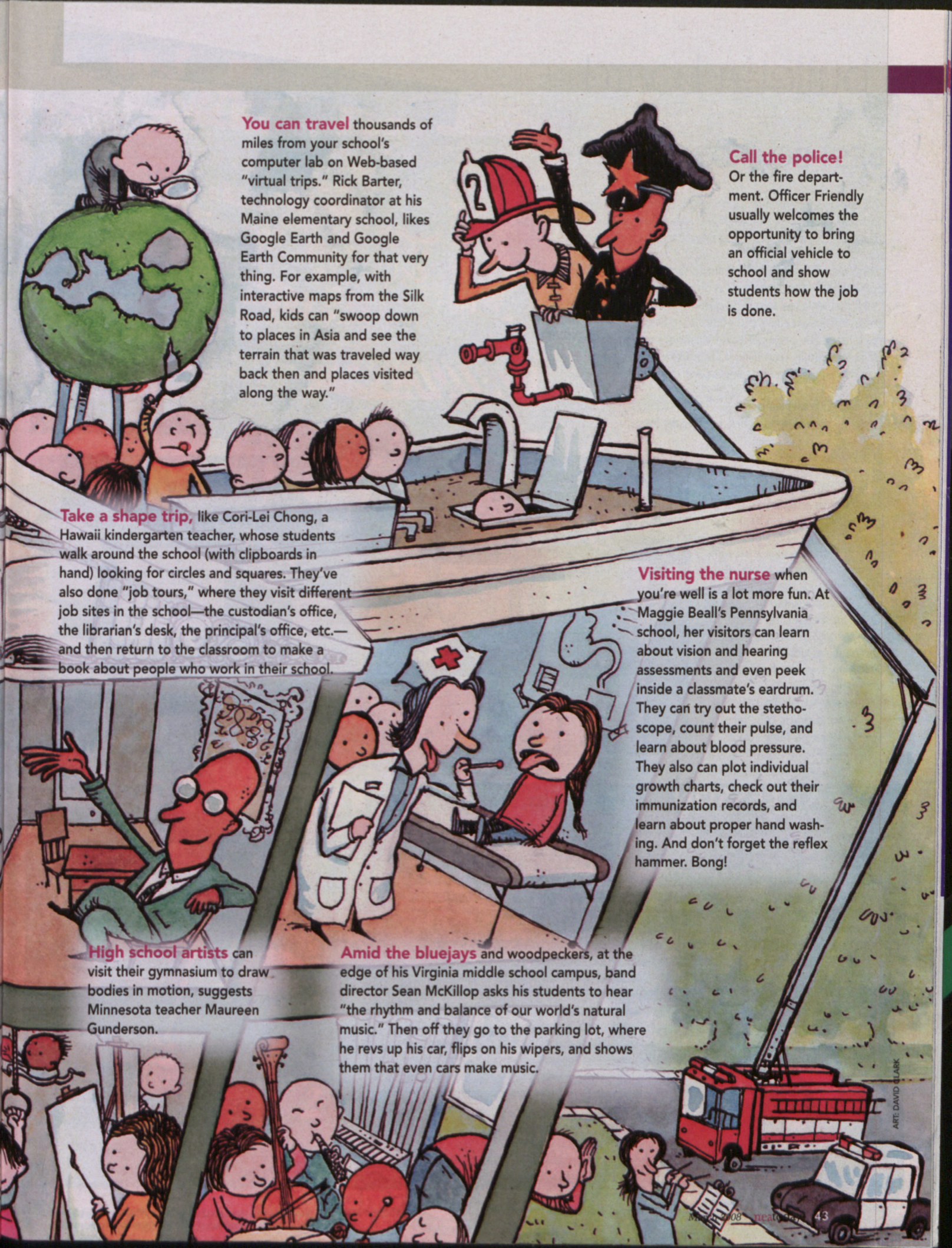
Up on the roof! Talk to your school custodian about roof access, where your students can study wind and clouds, observe birds, map their community, and learn about roof construction and drainage.

"Kids are curious about areas that are off-limits to them," notes Indiana teacher Hannah Sitzman. With plenty of notice to your colleagues, take them to the faculty lounge or workroom. Consider letting them use the snack machine as a special reward!

Send older students to read to younger kids or help youngsters with lessons that they've already mastered, suggests Cori-Lei Chong. They will be welcomed!

A magnifying glass can be fun to take outside, suggests author Carroll. During a walk around the schoolyard, ask students to take a close look at what's happening in pavement cracks, on trees, or even between grass blades.

Nutrition manager Claire Bailey takes students behind the scenes in their Lewiston, Maine, cafeteria. "They're totally amazed!" she says. They step inside the pantry, the refrigerator and freezer—but their favorite sight might be the steam jacket kettle, an enormous gas-powered pot that can boil up to 50 pounds of pasta. "It's like a big witch's brew pot."



You can travel thousands of miles from your school's computer lab on Web-based "virtual trips." Rick Barter, technology coordinator at his Maine elementary school, likes Google Earth and Google Earth Community for that very thing. For example, with interactive maps from the Silk Road, kids can "swoop down to places in Asia and see the terrain that was traveled way back then and places visited along the way."

Call the police! Or the fire department. Officer Friendly usually welcomes the opportunity to bring an official vehicle to school and show students how the job is done.

Take a shape trip, like Cori-Lei Chong, a Hawaii kindergarten teacher, whose students walk around the school (with clipboards in hand) looking for circles and squares. They've also done "job tours," where they visit different job sites in the school—the custodian's office, the librarian's desk, the principal's office, etc.—and then return to the classroom to make a book about people who work in their school.

Visiting the nurse when you're well is a lot more fun. At Maggie Beall's Pennsylvania school, her visitors can learn about vision and hearing assessments and even peek inside a classmate's eardrum. They can try out the stethoscope, count their pulse, and learn about blood pressure. They also can plot individual growth charts, check out their immunization records, and learn about proper hand washing. And don't forget the reflex hammer. Bong!

High school artists can visit their gymnasium to draw bodies in motion, suggests Minnesota teacher Maureen Gunderson.

Amid the bluejays and woodpeckers, at the edge of his Virginia middle school campus, band director Sean McKillop asks his students to hear "the rhythm and balance of our world's natural music." Then off they go to the parking lot, where he revs up his car, flips on his wipers, and shows them that even cars make music.

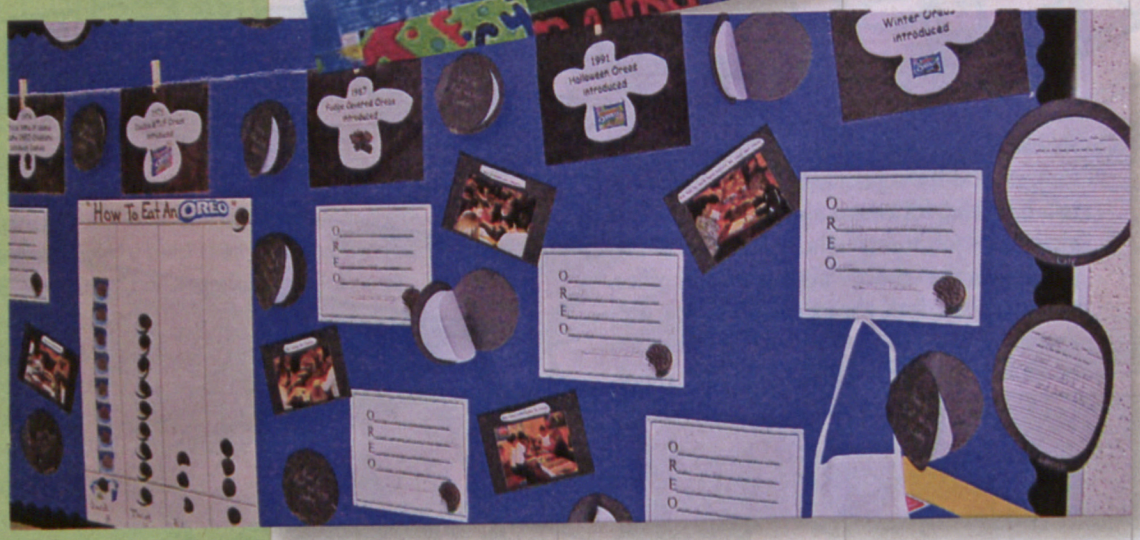
ART: DAVID CLARK

bulletin board

BEST BOARDS

This is a great start-of-school project. Each student gets two 6-by-12-in. pieces of any type of paper and markers. They are assigned to depict their name twice, based on their skill level. Kids love the assignment! High schoolers who desperately want to look alike and "fit in" but who also desperately crave their own identity and individualism have an out by getting to do their own name twice. It is an excellent project to learn about each student. At the beginning of the school year when I am otherwise totally unfamiliar with the kids, it helps me quickly learn their names and shows me personalities.

BROOKE MITTLEDORF
High school art teacher, Las Vegas, Nevada



In my class, I have students graph their preferred methods of eating an Oreo cookie to study trends and statistics. Then I have them write the best way to eat an Oreo to practice writing skills. We follow up with a cookie afternoon where we stack, measure, weigh, and sample all the different types of Oreo cookies. [Editor's note: Don't worry, McDonough says she cautions kids that Oreos aren't an everyday food.]

DANA MCDONOUGH
Second-grade teacher
Newburgh, New York

GREAT LESSON

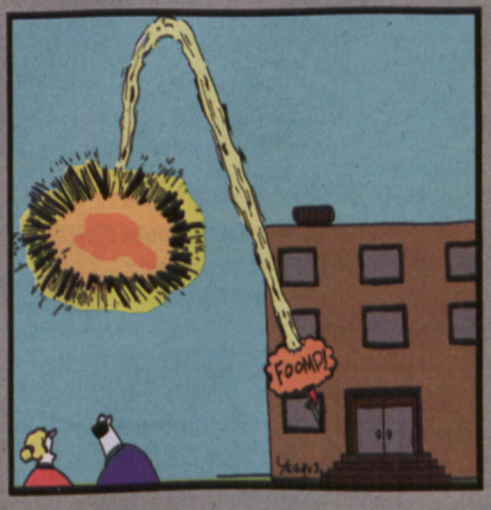
Finding Common Ground

At our high school we do a project on world religions, with the goal of getting students to better understand those whose beliefs are different from their own. Students divide into groups and over the course of the semester, develop detailed presentations on Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, Protestantism, and Catholicism. I tell them to avoid using this as a forum to attack or promote any religion.

I am thrilled when they note how similar the major religions are to each other. We even have the students align their research to the state standards themselves. This project fosters their organization, research, writing, speaking, and teamwork skills. It incorporates architecture, language arts, history, math, science, and foreign languages, and teachers from those disciplines are involved, too. Also, our school's secretary works with the students who need to make copies or design a bulletin board. It is truly a team project and hopefully a learning experience that will stay with them for life.

GERALD LYONS
Project-based instructor, North Bergen, New Jersey

© 2007 ALEJANDRO YEGROS



"The new teacher's in trouble!"

BULLETIN BOARD TOP: BROOKE MITTLEDORF; BULLETIN BOARD BOTTOM: LAUREN GENTILE; GREAT LESSON: COURTESY OF GERALD LYONS; CARTOON: ALEJANDRO YEGROS

MR. WOODHEAD
© 2000 by John P. Wood
YOU REALLY NEED TO WORK ON YOUR SITE. IT'S BORING. ADD SOME VIDEO OR SOMETHING.
BUT I DON'T HAVE A WEB SITE.
I KNOW.
I WAS TALKING ABOUT YOUR CLASSROOM.

Got a great classroom bulletin board, cool project, or creative lesson?

Send photos and descriptions of your bulletin boards, class projects, and best lesson plans to:

ckopkowski@nea.org. Please include your name, your job, and the community and state where you work. For a weekly e-mail of questions, answers, and practical classroom tips, join Works4Me, one of NEA's most popular and useful services. Just send the message "subscribe Works4Me" (without the quotation marks) to **Lyris@list.nea.org**.

TOP TIPS

Smoothing the Substitute Relationship

Have Lunch on Me

Whenever I need a substitute teacher, I try to remember to leave $2 for him or her to have lunch on me. Substitutes usually don't get paid a lot and this not only helps them out, but I find they are more willing to come at the drop of a hat when needed. I remember that when I was substituting, there were many times I didn't have any leftover money for a lunch since we were paid once a month.

WILMA PLAYFORD
First-grade teacher
Fort Payne, Alabama

...And a Snack, Too

I always leave a couple of quarters for the substitute to have a juice, pop, or snack on me. Some days, these subs are called very early in the morning and have long drives ahead of them. This is just one way of saying that I appreciate the effort.

MARCIA CHAMBERS
Fourth-grade teacher
Lancaster, Wisconsin

Impromptu Plays

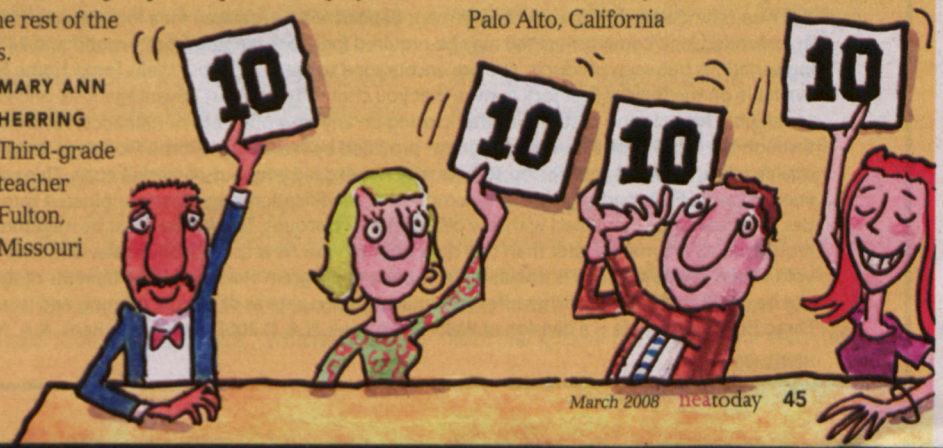
With my substitute plans, I include a generic schedule for the week, including times for lunch, recess, P.E., art, reading, library, math, and any additional duties I have. I have a substitute bag of supplies. I like to include some out-of-desk activities. For example, I assemble two bags with four or five props (old hat, stuffed animal, pencil, quarter, sunglasses) in each and a set of directions encouraging the substitute to divide the class into two groups and ask each to create a short play using all the props in the bag. Each student must have a speaking part in the play. Each group gets 15 minutes to create their play. At the end of the time, each group must present its play to the rest of the class.

MARY ANN HERRING
Third-grade teacher
Fulton, Missouri

Guest Teacher Rating

When I am absent, I ask the guest teacher to rate each class on a scale of 1 to 6, with 6 being an outstanding score. If a class receives a rating of 5 or 6, I provide verbal praise and a treat when I return. My students are aware of the system and what it takes to earn an outstanding score. Most of the time the students do score well. I call substitutes "guest teachers," and I discuss with the kids how one treats a guest. So far, so good.

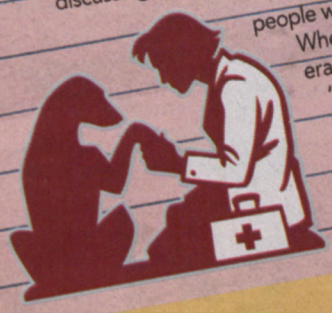
JEAN BABB
Middle school English teacher
Palo Alto, California



CHUCKLES

My mixed-age, self-contained behavioral class was discussing why we had Veteran's Day off. One student asked, "Aren't veterans those people who only eat vegetables?" When I explained what a veteran was I was quickly asked, "What about those people who work on animals?"

JENNIFER SHELTON
McMinnville, Oregon



CARTOON: JOHN P. WOOD; KIDS ACTING: RAYMAN; VETERINARIAN: CORY DOCKEN; JUDGES: ART GLAZER

NEA MAKES IT EASY TO GET COMPETITIVE RATES ON A MORTGAGE

Act Now! Mortgage Rates Are Down!

The rewards of homeownership are many, personally and financially. And whether you're buying your first home, building a new one, remodeling or refinancing, you want financing that's perfectly suited to your lifestyle and your goals. Put your trust in the **NEA Home Financing Program®** offered through Wells Fargo Home Mortgage.

We understand your needs and offer:

- **Competitive interest rates and fees**
- **Choice of mortgage options & terms to match your needs...even low or no down payment!**
- **Everything up until closing can be handled through a toll-free number**
- **Pre-Approvals**
- **Expanded interest rate lock-in option for up to two years[1]**

Count on our expertise and our commitment to teachers and education support professionals. We'll help you make informed home financing decisions that are right for you and your family.

Mortgages • Refinancing • Home Equity Loans

nea Member Benefits
neamb.com

WELLS FARGO HOME MORTGAGE

For more information and current rates Call us today at:
1-800-NEA-4-YOU (1-800-632-4968)
or visit us at:
www.neamb.com/hf

Ask about our exclusive *$200 NEA Member Closing Cost Rebate*[2]

1. A non-refundable closing cost commitment deposit will be required for a lock ranging from 3 months to 12 months on qualified products. An extended lock/commitment fee may be required for a lock ranging from 4 months to 24 months on qualified products. Due to daily pricing variations between products, you are encouraged to work with your Wells Fargo Home Mortgage Consultant to ensure that pricing available on the Builder Best lock feature that you choose is the most advantageously priced Builder Best lock feature for you. 2. Borrowers are eligible for a closing cost rebate after closing on any new purchase or refinance, secured by a first mortgage or deed of trust, closed through the NEA Home Financing Program® provided by Wells Fargo Home Mortgage (New Loan), on or after September 1, 2007, subject to qualification, approval and closing. Rebate may not exceed your out-of-pocket costs. This rebate is not available on home equity loans and lines of credit, FHA mortgage loans, assumption or modification loans, loans originated through brokers, joint ventures or other third parties, and cannot be combined with any other offer or discount. This rebate must be mentioned at the time of application, and all eligibility requirements are met no later than two days prior to your New Loan closing date. Only one rebate permitted per New Loan. This rebate is void where prohibited, and is transferable, subject to program availability. The benefits of the NEA Home Financing Program® cannot be combined with any other offer. Information is accurate as of date of printing and is subject to change without notice. Wells Fargo Home Mortgage is a division of Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. © 2007 Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. All rights reserved. #53193 12/07 – 3/08

EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

HFNT0308

the guide ...to entertainment

> party tips
> planning sites
> healthy snacks

PARTY CENTRAL

Making your house the place to be doesn't have to be expensive.

BY AMANDA LITVINOV

When George Neville became Archbishop of York in 1465, he celebrated with a three-day foodfest that is said to have included 4,000 pigeons, 2,000 pigs, 1,000 sheep, 400 peacocks—and for dessert? Two thousand hot custards. Most 21st-century Americans don't have a taste for peacock, but too many of us resist entertaining at home ("I'm too busy! It's too much work!"), as if the goal is to pull off a spectacle like Neville's legendary feast.

Keeping it simple, you see, is the key. "Anyone can entertain without overspending if they leave enough time to figure everything out beforehand," says Lori Perkins, author of *The Cheapskate's Guide to Entertaining: How to Throw Fabulous Parties on a Modest Budget*, and a literary agent who entertains often. With some planning and realistic expectations, you can open your home and break bread—not the bank—with the people you care about.

When it comes to a dinner party, the more time you spend planning, the more money you can save. "People remember good food," Perkins says, "which doesn't need to be expensive, it just needs to be good." Her suggestions? Start with simple bruschetta or stuffed mushrooms, which do take prep time, but not much money.

If you're feeding a large group, think pasta or salad. "Spaghetti and meatballs or chicken pesto is really easy," Perkins says. "With just two pounds of shrimp you can feed at least 20 people with a pasta or salad."

But hey, who says you have to do all the work? Potlucks will never go out of style, says Perkins, and they're great for busy people. Donna Pilato, who for the past eight years has been About.com's entertaining guide, offers another good informal option: the "Make Your Own (fill

PHOTO: MEIKO ARQUILLOS

in the blank) Party." "Hosting a make your own tacos or pizza party gets people interacting. The host does the prep, but everyone shares in the production." It's also perfect for including youngsters, who love customizing their food.

Then again, you know what they say about early birds. (Should we talk about worms in a story about food?) "Brunch is definitely a less expensive, family friendly way to have a party," says Pilato, "and you can set up the night before, with overnight casseroles and purchased pastries."

Of course, many of the best soirees don't revolve around a sit-down meal. Fondue parties, wine tastings, and dessert receptions are all popular options, and guests tend to be more than happy to supply whatever breads, cheeses, wines, or sweets you ask for.

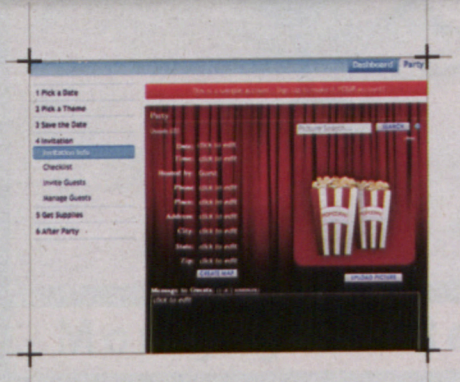
Other gatherings focus on an event as much as the food. Movie viewings require enough comfy seating, snacks, sodas, and perhaps a choice of beer or wine (remember, keeping the spirits capped is one of the best ways to keep dollars in your wallet). "There's always an excuse for a party," says Pilato—March Madness, anyone?—it's just a matter of making it feel like an occasion.

"Go with your strengths," she suggests. "If you're a great cook or baker, make that the focal point of your party. Otherwise, buy the food or host a potluck, and let your style come through by setting the party atmosphere."

But remember, "it only takes a few special touches to make a get-together memorable," says Pilato. Getting too wrapped up in a theme overwhelms the hosts and discourages them from entertaining again anytime soon.

Keep telling yourself you're too busy to entertain—or that your guests expect peacock! and pigeon! and pig!—and you end up depriving yourself of face time with your nearest and dearest. Says Perkins: "When you look back, you'll always wish you had spent more time with friends and family."

No More Licking Envelopes



Evite isn't the only electronic invitation service out there. Pick the one that's right for you and get the party started.

Gather 'round the punch bowl

Get the gang organized without an endless exchange of e-mails. Using www.mypunchbowl.com, the host can poll guests about potential event dates, giving extra weight to responses from guests designated VIPs. The party discussion board means everyone can chat without the host's oversight. After the big day, share stories, photos, and video on the After Party section. The site also offers a never-ending list of reasons to celebrate (as if you need it!).

I dunno. What do you want to do?

"Fuzzy planning" is the premise behind www.skobee.com. Name the date and see if your buddies have some ideas, or throw out something you'd like to do and find out when others can join in. If you start an event planning conversation over e-mail, just include simple tags like "when:" and "who:" and cc Skobee. It'll track all discussion threads so you don't have to.

The democratic party planner

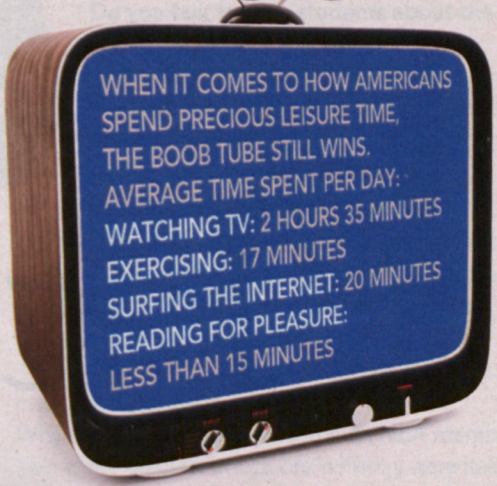
Let invitees vote on every aspect of the plans. Planypus (http://planyp.us) is essentially a party wiki, meaning anyone can change its content until an organizer designates it finalized. This is the invite site for those on the go: it'll send updates however you and those on your list care to receive them, including e-mail, SMS, or RSS, and you can export the event to your blog or Web page.

PHOTO: C SQUARED STUDIOS

HOW I... Make Time for My Favorite Hobby

She's a full-time teacher and head track coach at Camas High School in Camas, Washington. She's also a wife and mother to—count 'em, one, two, three, four boys! So how on Earth does Alisa Wise have time to go race motorcycles? It all boils down to deciding "what has to get done, and what can wait," she says. "Even when the laundry pile is rising and the paint is chipping, we pack up the motorcycles and head up to the mountains," she says. Since her family joins her on the trails, motocross is a chance to create family memories. To ensure that day-to-day responsibilities don't eat up all their fun time, team Wise plots each week's activities in detail. Wise says one of her best strategies for getting revved up for the weekend, is staying after school on Fridays to plan the following week. Then, vroom vroom, she's off for the weekend, guilt-free.

2:35


WHEN IT COMES TO HOW AMERICANS SPEND PRECIOUS LEISURE TIME, THE BOOB TUBE STILL WINS.
AVERAGE TIME SPENT PER DAY:
WATCHING TV: 2 HOURS 35 MINUTES
EXERCISING: 17 MINUTES
SURFING THE INTERNET: 20 MINUTES
READING FOR PLEASURE: LESS THAN 15 MINUTES

SOURCES: TIME MAGAZINE; WWW.TIME.COM/TIME/2007/AMERICA_NUMBERS/PLAY.HTML; "TO READ OR NOT TO READ," NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

Can a snack that calls itself healthier still be tasty?

Our tasting panel at Neabsco Elementary School in Woodbridge, Virginia, set out to help us answer that question:

	ROBERT'S AMERICAN GOURMET VEGGIE BOOTY	SAHALE SNACKS VALDOSTA PECANS	TRADER JOE'S REDUCED GUILT KETTLE COOKED POTATO CHIPS	STACY'S GARLIC & HERB PITA CHIPS	NEWMAN'S OWN ORGANIC MICROWAVE POP'S CORN
Price	$2.29/4 oz.	$4.69/5 oz.	$1.79/7 oz.	$2.49/6 oz.	$2.79/9 oz.
Description	Puffed rice and corn flavored with spinach and kale.	Black-peppered pecans and cranberries seasoned with orange zest.	Slow kettle-cooked in sunflower oil for maximum crunch.	Baked pita chips flavored with real parmesan, garlic, and parsley.	Bags of organic popcorn that cook in organic oils.
Healthier?	Other ingredients include cabbage, carrots, and broccoli. Eat a quarter of the bag and you've only consumed 130 calories.	Can the other snacks in your pantry boast all natural ingredients, no cholesterol, no trans fats, and low sodium?	Snack traditionalists will cheer: 33 percent less fat and 20 percent fewer calories than regular chips.	Low sodium, too! Baked and all-natural ingredients mean fats are kept in check. Remember, dipping means more calories.	No hydrogenated shortening or trans fatty acids in this "light butter" variety—which is more than can be said for theater popcorn.
Our tasting panel says	"Tastes like a mouthful of seawater." —Yvette West, fifth-grade teacher	"I wasn't expecting the pepper, but the cranberries balanced out the snack." —Tammy Delene, preschool teacher	"Pleasant taste, but too hard to chew." —Elaine Crane, special education assistant	"Good snack to satisfy those salty cravings." —Derra Banks, librarian	"I'm not inspired to give up my movie theater butter." —Celia Stone, P.E. assistant
Company fun fact	Robert's healthy snack line includes Frooty Booty, Pirate's Swag (trail mix), and Chaos (chips and pretzel mix).	Sahale makes six different nut blends. They offer recipes that incorporate the nuts on their Web site: www.sahalesnacks.com.	All of the signs inside Trader Joe's stores are painted by local artists.	Owner Stacy Madison began selling pita chips when she operated a sandwich cart in Boston.	Newman's Own Foundation has given more than $200 million to charity since 1982—all profits after taxes are donated.

TV PHOTO: IVAN STEVANOVIC; FOOD ITEMS: GROFF CREATIVE, INC.

Fits like a glove.

NEA offers life insurance plans tailored to your needs.

THINK LIFE

Think NEA Members Insurance Trust

With so many insurance options available today it's almost impossible to know what is the best, most affordable way to protect your family. Fortunately, as a member of the NEA, you can turn to your Association for discounted, personalized protection to meet your specific needs.

For over 40 years the NEA Members Insurance Trust has been partnering with top insurance providers to offer coverage that best fits members' unique needs at exclusive rates.

Get started right now. Go to **neamb.com/thinklife** to see our full range of products and to use our Insurance Needs calculator to determine the kind and amount of coverage best for you. Or speak directly to a knowledgeable NEA representative by calling **1-800-637-4636**.

NEA Members Insurance Trust®

TRNT0308

Bill Dal Cerro

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Film, literature, and communications teacher; documentary producer

You were a producer on a film about Italian-American immigrants called *And They Came to Chicago*. What did that entail?

Establishing ties with the local PBS station, getting the filmmaker and historical research, tapping into business and history associates, generating publicity for the film.

What stirred you to explore your roots?

Alex Haley's book, *Roots*.

Who's more damaging to Italian Americans—Tony Soprano or Vito Corleone?

The characters aren't a problem so much as what they represent: institutionalized caricatures. People subliminally accept the idea that Italian Americans are either crooks and/or low-class.

Do you talk to your students about the damage of these stereotypes?

I do a unit on gangster movies, which gives me the opportunity to examine such stereotypes, as well as organized crime in general.

What do you consider the top two contributions of Italians to civilization?

The Italian Renaissance and the birth of America. (Many of our Founding Fathers, such as Thomas Jefferson, loved Italy and read Roman writers.)

What's your next project?

I'm writing a book about the history of Italians in jazz music, due out this summer.

Why did you decide to become an NEA member?

Two of the greatest educators in history were Italian: Vittorino da Feltre during the Renaissance and Maria Montessori in the 20th century. In my own small, modest, American way, I'd like to carry their passion for teaching into the new millennium.

SHORT TAKES

Sarah Grigsby

GLENDALE, ALABAMA

School bus driver

When Grigsby first stepped onto a school-bus to start her career, Elvis Presley had a No. 1 hit with "Don't Be Cruel." The year was 1956 and she's logged untold miles since then and had more than her share of students say that she drove their parents and even grandparents. While Grigsby's loved her job, she says she doesn't miss the old buses that required checking under the hood when the spark plug wires would come loose or the wipers that required manually turning them on and off for each pass across the windshield.

Ellen Rosenberg Rodwick

PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

Retired kindergarten teacher, "Squirt the Clown"

How did you get into clowning?

Inspired by the film *Patch Adams*, I researched hospital clowning and found [a local clown academy].

What's the best part about being a clown?

Bringing a smile to a sick child or giving parents a welcome break from the stress.

Does anything ever make you a sad clown?

Not allowed! (But toddlers on the oncology ward test my intentions.)

What's the better gag—squirting flower or honkable rubber nose?

Definitely the nose. I never do anything to my audience that could be scary or surprising.

What's the wackiest thing that's ever happened to you while you were clowning or on the way to a gig?

I ended up on TV, making up a local reporter as a clown and teaching him magic.

Do you get funny looks when you're driving to a gig?

Absolutely! Drivers at stoplights are always doing double-takes.

Why did you become an NEA member?

I was proud to join the ranks of such talented individuals who contribute so much to society.

PEOPLE POLL

What do you hope March winds blow your way? A spa day gift certificate—38%; A "free oil change, car wash, and wax" coupon—35%; A $100 gift card for the bookstore—21%; A note saying, "I'll babysit the kids all day today, honey."—6%; *Head to www.neatoday.org to vote in April's Poll:* **What makes you feel most like an April fool?**

PHOTOS TOP: DAVID R. BARNES; BOTTOM RIGHT: DAVID DENOMA; BOTTOM LEFT: SUZIE SMITH

resources

53 **Grants & Awards** Teens win awards for designing driver safety campaigns for their peers.

57 **Take Note** Read about a pioneering system to assess the threat of school violence, plus steps to implement one at your school.

57 **Heads Up from NEA Member Benefits** Until March 15, save 20 percent on a *Weekly Reader* subscription.

59 **Diversity Calendar** March is Women's History Month.

61 **On the Web** Looking for a way to teach science to young students? Try podcasts!

61 **Books by NEA Members** A reading teacher fills a critical gap with a novel for young teens who read at a lower level.

62 **On TV** A look at the administration of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the first woman president of Liberia.

Deadline Approaching for the NEA Foundation's June 2008 Grant Review

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY JUNE 1, 2008, FOR BOTH THE *STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GRANTS* AND THE *LEARNING & LEADERSHIP GRANTS*

Student Achievement Grants provide $5,000 to improve the academic achievement of students by engaging them in critical thinking and problem-solving that deepens their knowledge of standards-based subject matter.

THE NEA FOUNDATION
www.neafoundation.org

Learning & Leadership Grants provide opportunities for teachers, education support professionals, and higher education faculty and staff to engage in high-quality professional development and lead their colleagues in professional growth. The grant amount is $2,000 for individuals and $5,000 for groups engaged in collegial study.

Recipients will be notified by August 15, 2008. Grants fund activities for 12 months from the award date. For more information, including guidelines and applications, visit **www.neafoundation.org** or call (202) 822-7840.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AWARDS

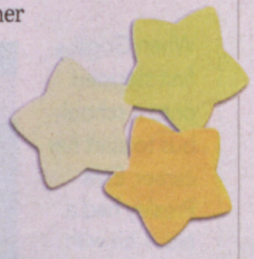
The Christopher Columbus Awards, a national, community-based science and technology program for middle school students, challenge students to work in teams of three or four with an adult coach to identify a problem in their community and apply the scientific method to create an innovative solution.

Four finalist teams and their coaches will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to Walt Disney World to attend National Championship Week and compete for valuable U.S. Savings Bonds, plus a $200 development grant to further refine their idea.

The deadline to apply is **March 17, 2008**. For more information and to apply, visit **www.christophercolumbusawards.com**.

STARS OF TEACHING SHINE

The U.S. Department of Education's Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative is accepting nominations for the 2008 American Stars of Teaching program. Parents, students, colleagues, school administrators, and others can nominate an exemplary teacher who they believe has the qualities to be an American Star of Teaching.



U.S. teachers who are improving student achievement using innovative strategies in the classroom and making a difference in the lives of their students are eligible to apply. One American Star will be honored in each state and the District of Columbia.

The deadline to submit a nomination is **March 31, 2008**. Go to **www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/index.html** for more information and to read about past winners.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION AWARD

The Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) is sponsoring an essay contest in the memory of former ACTE senior director of communications, Cliff Weiss (1951–2004). Cliff Weiss had a passion for career and technical education, and the contest recognizes CTE students who share the same passion and talents.

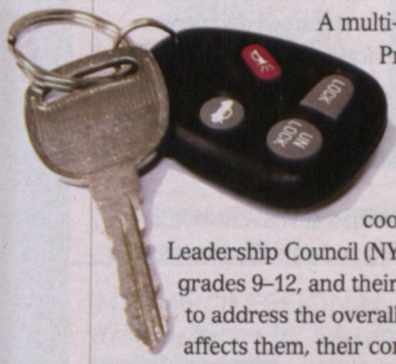
This year, secondary and post-secondary students who are enrolled in at least one career and technical education course will be asked to respond to the question: "How will what you learned in CTE help the American economy in five years?" The essay should be no less than 500 words in length for post-secondary and no more than 500 words in length for secondary students. One entry

PHOTO: STOCK EXCHANGE

in each category will win $250 and publication in ACTE's *Techniques* magazine.

The deadline to enter is **March 31, 2008**. For more information, go to **www.acteonline.org/about/awards/CWMEC/index.cfm**.

PROJECT IGNITION TEEN DRIVER SAFETY GRANTS



A multi-phase service-learning competition, Project Ignition helps teens spread their own words about driver safety and win grant money for their schools.

Sponsored by State Farm and coordinated by the National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC), the program gives students, grades 9–12, and their teachers a chance to work together to address the overall issue of teen driver safety—how it affects them, their community, and the world.

With the support of a teacher/advisor and their school or organization, students are given free reign over how to communicate their message. Elements can include traditional and non-traditional media: TV, print, radio, Internet (e-mail blasts, Web casts), direct (mail, posters, flyers), events/festivals, performance art (dance, drama, music), exhibitions (art, photography, sculpture), short films, cinema trailers, publishing (books, magazines) and more.

Important dates include:

MAY 16, 2008 Deadline to submit ideas/applications
EARLY JUNE 25 winners are notified
EARLY SEPTEMBER Presentation of $2,000 grant checks
SEPTEMBER–DECEMBER Students implement grant ideas
DECEMBER 1 Deadline to submit final projects
MID-JANUARY 2009 10 finalists awarded up to $5,000 for travel to the National Service Learning Conference
MARCH 2009 National Service Learning Conference (Nashville)

At the conference, the 10 finalist projects will be presented to an audience of peers, and a single Best of the Best award of $10,000 will be given to a selected school or organization.

Visit **www.sfprojectignition.com** for more information.

GO OVERBOARD CHALLENGE GRANTS

Burton Snowboards and *Girl Overboard* author Justina Chen Headley, in partnership with Youth Venture, are co-sponsoring the Go Overboard Challenge Grants to find the best youth-led ideas to change the world.

Students are encouraged to form teams and commit to a cause they're already passionate about—whether it's saving the environment, ending world hunger, or protecting endangered species. For example, Olympic Gold medalist Hannah Teter bottles Vermont-grown maple syrup ("Hannah's Gold") to earn money for AIDS orphans in Africa. The best ideas will win one of many grants of up to $1,000 each to put the plans into action.

The application deadline is **May 1, 2008**. Grants will be awarded on a rolling basis. Visit **www.burton.com/gobsite/ChallengeGrant.aspx** for complete information and rules.

SPRINT AHEAD FOR EDUCATION GRANTS

The Sprint Foundation will award grants to school districts and individual schools to fund the purchase of resource materials, supplies, equipment, and software that facilitates and encourages character education among K–12 students.

Applications will be accepted for character education programs that promote youth leadership, youth volunteerism, school pride, and a positive school culture. Examples include:

COSTS associated with hosting a youth leadership conference
CHARACTER education curriculum and teacher training
DIRECT project-related costs for community service/service-learning programs
SCHOOL improvement projects that serve to enhance and build school pride.

District level grants are available from $10,000 to $25,000. School level grants are available from $500 to $5,000. In 2008, the Sprint Foundation is planning to award up to 75 grants totalling $600,000 in combined awards to schools and school districts.

The application period is **March 3–April 15, 2008**. Applications must be submitted online at **www.sprint.com/citizenship/education/sprintahead**. All applicants will be notified via e-mail of their grant status by June 30.

Planning to Celebrate Read Across America?
Check out our new materials and tools at the Read Across America Web site. You'll find posters, flyers, proclamations, bookmarks, and more. And don't forget to let us know your plans by taking the Pledge to Participate.
www.nea.org/readacross
March 3, 2008
THE CAT IN THE HA
Grab your hat and read with the Cat! Celebrate NEA's Read Across America Day and share your love of reading.

PHOTO: MIKE JOHNSON

NEW SCHOLARSHIPS NOW AVAILABLE!
as part of a federally-funded Institute of Museum and Library Services grant

Earn your master's degree on your own time, from home with
Mansfield University's SCHOOL LIBRARY AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES PROGRAM.

SCHOOL LIBRARIANS ARE IN DEMAND. BECOME ONE... ONLINE.

- Award-winning practitioner-based faculty
- Personalized teaching via the web, email & phone
- Nationally recognized NCATE-AASL reviewed & approved School Library Media Education Program
- Accredited by the Middle States Association and certified by the Pennsylvania Dept. of Education

MANSFIELD UNIVERSITY
mansfield.edu

Visit us at: http://library.mansfield.edu/ or email: gradapp@mansfield.edu

CALL 1-800-577-6826 FOR A FREE DVD ABOUT THE PROGRAM!

Take Note

FREE BOOKLET ABOUT CERVICAL CANCER

NEAHIN HEALTH INFORMATION NETWORK

In partnership with the American Social Health Association (www.asha.org), the NEA Health Information Network has produced a free resource to help NEA members and the families and students they serve make informed decisions about cervical cancer prevention. The booklet, *Talking About Cervical Cancer Prevention*, is a short, engaging resource that provides information about cervical cancer and the virus that causes it: human papillomavirus (HPV). Since the first vaccine was released, many questions have surfaced. This booklet answers many of those questions, such as: *Who should get vaccinated? When should I get tested? I have HPV—what now?*

Talking About Cervical Cancer Prevention is available for download at **www.neahin.org**, or to request copies, contact Sara Jacobson at **sjacobson@nea.org** or Jamie Ekatomatis at **jekatomatis@nea.org**.

BRINGING OUR TROOPS HOME

A year has passed since NEA President Reg Weaver wrote to President George Bush to convey NEA's concerns about the ongoing war in Iraq, its impact on students whose parents have been deployed, and its drain on the nation's financial resources. And, while fully supporting the troops in Iraq and insisting they be provided with necessary resources, Weaver—and NEA's Representative Assembly—also called for an appropriate exit strategy to bring them home.

Since then, NEA continues to work with like-minded groups and coalitions and encourages its affiliates and members to do the same. Some of those groups, plus ways to learn more about them, are:

RETHINKING SCHOOLS—They offer curricular resources, including *Whose Wars? Teaching about the Iraq War and the War on Terrorism*, at **www.rethinkingschools.org**

UNITED FOR PEACE IN JUSTICE, one of the largest anti-war groups with many local affiliates, at **www.unitedforpeace.org**

U.S. LABOR AGAINST THE WAR, where, among other resources, you can download a poster, at **www.uslaboragainstwar.org**

CODEPINK, a women-initiated peace movement, at **www.codepink4peace.org**.

WHEN GIRLS DON'T GRADUATE, WE ALL FAIL

A recent report from the National Women's Law Center (NWLC), *When Girls Don't Graduate, We All Fail: A Call to Improve High School Graduation Rates for Girls*, finds that girls drop out of high school at almost the same rate as boys. One in four girls won't graduate with a regular diploma within four years. Plus, the economic costs of dropping out are particularly damaging for girls. Female dropouts earn significantly lower wages than male dropouts, are at greater risk of unemployment, and are more likely to rely on public support programs.

The Center emphasizes that interventions to address the crisis must be tailored to the different needs of boys and girls of all races and ethnicities, based on their distinct experiences and the enhanced research and data collection recommended by the report.

Policymakers, educators, students, and parents all have a role to play in providing the support students need to stay in school. A comprehensive prevention strategy also requires:

COMBATING sexual harassment in schools. Both boys and girls report that they drop out in part because they do not feel safe at school.

PROVIDING better support for pregnant and parenting students. Pregnancy and parenting responsibilities play a significant role in many girls' decisions

PHOTO: MARINKA VAN HOLTEN

EDUCATION MARKET

EARN YOUR M.Ed. FOR JUST $285 A CREDIT–100% ONLINE

NCU's School of Education offers the M.Ed. in 13 specializations at a cost of $285 a semester credit. Specializations are continuously updated so you can earn advanced education degrees in areas of your particular interest.

Visit www.ncu.edu/academics/graduate/education_med_specializations.aspx

NEA PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY

THE Bookstore for Educators

It takes inspiration to keep students motivated and excited to learn. The **NEA Professional Library** has the innovative resources you need to revitalize your classroom. Each title is research-based and designed for application in real classrooms. Whether you're a veteran educator or brand new to the classroom, you'll find materials designed to help you meet the challenges you face every day. To order, call **800-229-4200** or visit us at **www.nea.org/books**.

NEA TEACHER TOOLKIT

Tools For Teachers

- Curriculum Tools
- IEP Tools
- Assessment Tools
- Grade Book Tools
- Classroom Tools
- Performance Tools

Sign up today!
www.neateachertoolkit.com

NEA MEMBER BENEFITS

Look for the NEA Seal of Excellence on exceptional products and services provided to members through NEA Member Benefits. NEA Member Benefits is pleased to introduce the NEA Seal of Excellence, a mark of distinction earned by outstanding products and services offered only to NEA members and their families. Of the many products reviewed by NEA Member Benefits, only a distinguished few can earn the NEA Seal of Excellence.

EARN YOUR M.S., MASTER'S PLUS 30 OR ED.S. FROM HOME IN 14 MONTHS

BrainSmart.org

Join the more than 1,500 educators who have chosen to strengthen student learning and enhance their careers with these accredited degrees earned 100% online since 2001. Learn practical brain-based strategies for increasing student achievement shared with 100,000 educators at conferences including NBPTS, NAESP, ASCD, and regional NEA conferences. APPLY by March 31, start in June and your $50 application fee is waived. Call 1-866-SMART61,

nsu@brainsmart.org, www.brainsmart.org

DR. JANET ALLEN'S PLUGGED-IN PROGRAMS

Dr. Janet Allen's Plugged▶in to Reading™

Plugged-in to Reading is a reading program for middle and high schools authored by adolescent literacy expert, author, and teacher Dr. Janet Allen and published by Recorded Books. Available this year is Plugged-in to Nonfiction, a reading program based on a classroom library of authentic nonfiction. Call 1-800-638-1304

www.PluggedintoReading.com

DVDs TO ENLIGHTEN AND ENGAGE STUDENTS IN GRADES 6-12

On Common Ground is the true story of a reunion between American and German soldiers 55 years after the battle of the Huertgen Forest. Features commentary from Tom Brokaw and Walter Cronkite along with never before seen historical World War II Combat Footage. Includes lesson plans, a study guide and interactive pop-up version.

Available for $59.99 at www.aaadvdstore.com/educationalmedia.html

You May Have Completed All Your Coursework for Your Doctoral or Master's Degree

All relevant post-baccalaureate courses, including master's degree credits and approved continuing education coursework accepted for transfer.

- **Accredited & Founded in 1979**

Specifically designed for educators who possess significant post-baccalaureate coursework. U.S. Information Center 888-989-GRAD (4723).

www.iugrad.edu.kn
www.iugrad.com

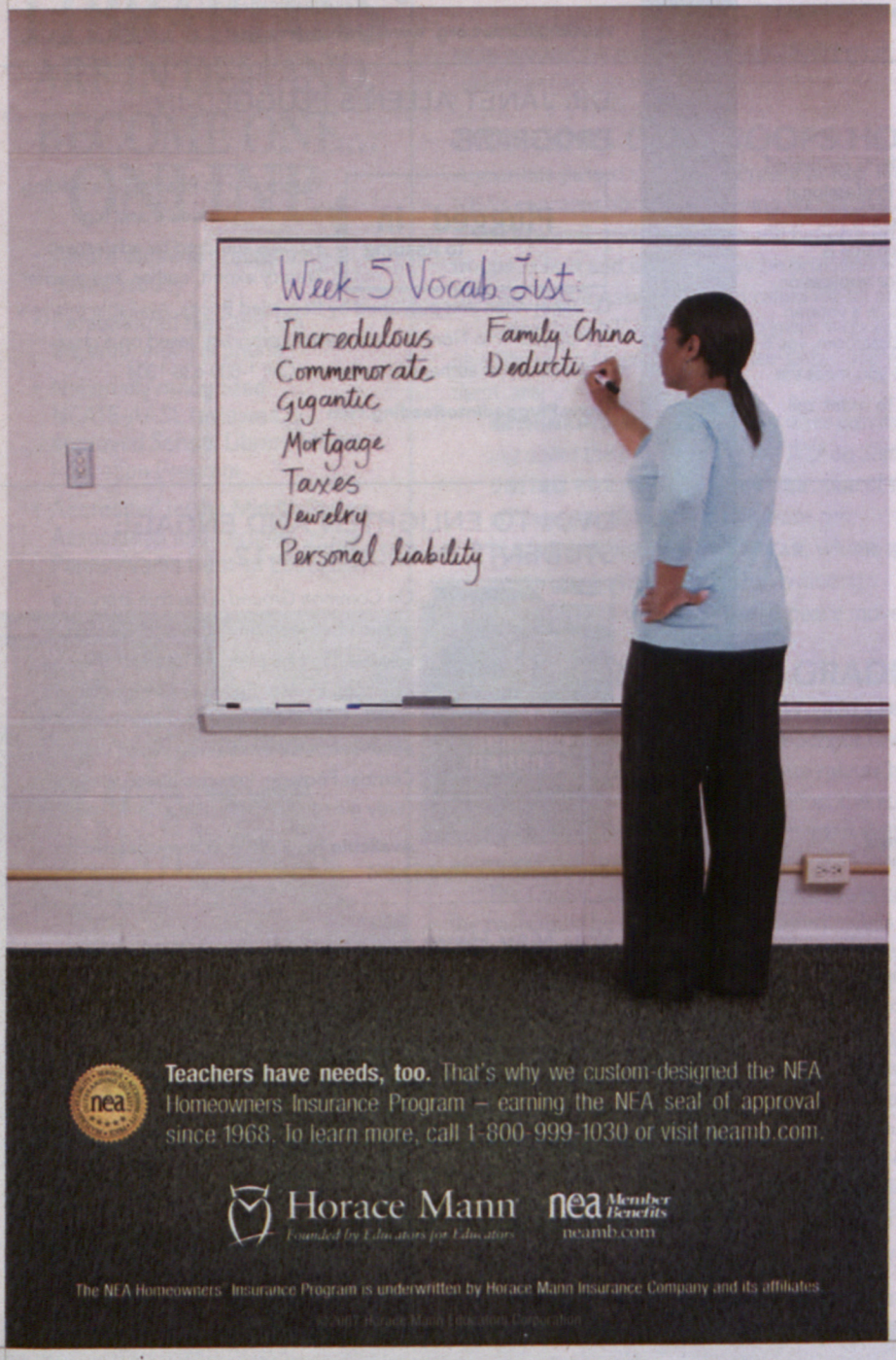
INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY FOR GRADUATE STUDIES

to drop out of school.

ENSURING equal access for girls to career and technical education classes. These classes provide training for high-skill, high-wage jobs. Offering career education programs that emphasize the link between academic work, college success, and careers has been proven to reduce dropout rates.

ENSURING equal access for girls to after-school programs, including athletics. Studies show that participation improves graduation rates and academic achievement.

NWLC has created primers on sexual harassment, pregnant and parenting students, career and technical education, and Title IX athletics requirements. To download, visit **www.nwlc.org/dropout**.


Week 5 Vocab List
Incredulous
Commemorate
Gigantic
Mortgage
Taxes
Jewelry
Personal liability
Family China
Deductible
Teachers have needs, too. That's why we custom-designed the NEA Homeowners Insurance Program – earning the NEA seal of approval since 1968. To learn more, call 1-800-999-1030 or visit neamb.com.
Horace Mann
Founded by Educators for Educators
nea Member Benefits
neamb.com
The NEA Homeowners Insurance Program is underwritten by Horace Mann Insurance Company and its affiliates.

THE TRINATIONAL COALITION: FINDING COMMON GROUND

On the 40th anniversary of the 1968 Mexican student protests and the Los Angeles student walkouts, the eighth Trinational Conference in Defense of Public Education will be held at the United Teachers Los Angeles headquarters April 18–20.

The Trinational Coalition to Defend Public Education first met in 1994, when delegates from the United States, Canada, and Mexico gathered to coordinate opposition efforts to NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement). Since then, the Coalition has continued to defend public education and the rights of educators to organize, and also to fight against privatization and trade liberalization. A recent effort considered how to best support protesting teachers in Oaxaca, Mexico, and their demands for better pay and resources.

Although many of their efforts and membership have been Mexican or Canadian, the Coalition hopes to involve more American members in its work. For more information, or to contact any of the national coordinators, including U.S. Coordinator Dan Leahy, go to **www.trinationalcoalition.org**.

THIRD ANNUAL AMERICAN MOCK TRIAL INVITATIONAL

The North Carolina Academy of Trial Lawyers and the New Jersey State Bar Foundation invite qualifying high school student teams to compete against top mock trial finalists from all parts of the world in the third American Mock Trial Invitational (AMTI) for high school students May 18–20, 2008, at the Mecklenburg County Courthouse in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Contestants will try a challenging case, visit an outdoor recreation center, and enjoy a private dinner and educational tour of the Mint Museum of Art.

The cost to register a team (a team consists of 7–10 students) is $200, which includes continental breakfasts; hot buffet lunches; an orientation dinner; bus transportation; AMTI souvenirs; and trial practice rooms for scrimmages. If you are interested, contact Sheila Boro, Director of Mock Trial Programs, New Jersey State Bar Foundation, as soon as possible at (732) 937-7519 or **sboro@njsbf.org**.

SAYING 'THANK YOU' TO TEACHERS

When asked what gift they would most like to receive from their students, nearly half of all teachers say a simple "thank you" will suffice. Last year, NEA and the National Parent Teacher Association joined forces to build the

"Nation's Largest Teacher Thank You Card." The effort will culminate during Teacher Appreciation Week (May 4–11) with the card's unveiling. Thousands of individual thank you cards from people across the nation will be compiled into one gigantic card that will travel to major cities and events throughout the year and serve as a public tribute to teachers and a reminder of the hard work and dedication that goes into teaching.

There are two easy ways to participate: Send a thank you e-card by visiting **www.teacherthankyoucard.org** or mail a thank you card to: The Nation's Largest Teacher Thank You Card, c/o NEA/PTA, P.O. Box 66458, Washington, D.C. 20035

A PROBLEM OF THE SENSES

Pat is a fourth-grader who seems to be in constant motion. He pokes and bumps into other students and gets into confrontations that seem irrational and unnecessary. What's his problem?

His doctor says it's "sensory integration dysfunction," an inability to "modulate, discriminate, coordinate, or organize sensation adaptively." There are ways to help him—ways to avoid setting him off and also ways to help him learn to change how he responds to stimulation. NEA's Web site has more information on this problem, and links to other sites that can help if Pat, or someone like him is one of your students. Find them at **www.nea.org/specialed/resources-specialed.html**, along with a wealth of other materials and links for educators of children with disabilities.

ASSESSING THREATS IN SCHOOL

When faced with a student who may be prone to violence, how do administrators know when to worry, when not to worry, and how to intervene? Educators across three counties in Oregon faced this situation, and in searching for answers, developed Student Threat Assessment (STAT)—a regional system that draws resources from schools, mental health agencies, law enforcement bureaus, and other youth-serving organizations.

STAT is designed to address two common types of violence: targeted violence that's planned and aimed at specific individuals; and reactive violence that's an immediate, emotional response to provocation or a perceived threat. Learn about this pioneering effort, plus 10 steps to implementing a threat assessment system, at the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory Web site: **http://nwrel.org/nwedu/13-01/coord**. You can find more strategies and resources on how to make your classroom safer at **www.nea.org/ref?threat**.

Teaching Research Spotlight
If you're interested in what the research says about your profession, visit NEA's online venue highlighting professional research on best practices in educational issues.
March's focus is on
Single-Gender Education
Learn more at www.nea.org/ref?marresearch

Heads Up from NEA Member Benefits

DEALS AT HUNDREDS OF YOUR FAVORITE STORES!

NEA CLICK & SAVE is an exclusive online shopping service for NEA members that offers savings on brand name merchandise from hundreds of top retailers, online stores, and local merchants. From gourmet food and flowers, travel and vacation deals, entertainment tickets, home décor and electronics, to sports and wellness products, wedding gifts, and even clothing for the entire family, NEA Click & Save offers you dozens of options—and more.

It's easy—just sign up at the NEA Member Benefits Web site and start shopping! When you register, you can even request e-mail reminders from your favorite merchants about upcoming sales and discounts (click on *E-mail Reminders* at the top of the registration page).

Enjoy shopping convenience and savings now! Visit **www.neamb.com/clickandsave**.

SAVE 20 PERCENT ON *WEEKLY READER*—ONLY UNTIL MARCH 15

SINCE 1902, *Weekly Reader* has touched the lives of millions of kids and teenagers every week of the school year. Generations of parents and teachers have trusted *Weekly Reader* to help their children learn and grow in the world around them.

From now through March 15, 2008, NEA Member Benefits and *Weekly Reader* are offering 20 percent off a classroom subscription for school year 2008–09. Remember, you must act by March 15, 2008, to benefit from this special discount.

For more information or to place an order, go to **www.neamb.com/reader**.

BE SURE TO REGISTER FOR THE MONTHLY GIVEAWAY ON WWW.NEAMB.COM!

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

Don't miss your opportunity.

Promoting Sexual Responsibility:
A Teen Pregnancy Prevention Resource for School Employees
by Eva Marx, Vicki Harrison & Kendra Strauss Riggs

Opportunities arise every day for educators to help students avoid risky behaviors that can result in unwanted consequences—like teen pregnancy. Despite a recent decline, the United States still leads the western industrialized world in teen pregnancy and unplanned births.

Promoting Sexual Responsibility: A Teen Pregnancy Prevention Resource for School Employees offers strategies that educators can use to help students act responsibly. Drawing on current research and practice, this book answers some difficult questions, such as:

- ✓ **How pervasive is teen pregnancy?**
- ✓ **What can I do to reduce teen pregnancy, promote responsible behavior, and help students succeed?**
- ✓ **Are there examples of programs and activities that work?**
- ✓ **When should schools start to address this problem?**
- ✓ **How can we build a community coalition?**
- ✓ **How do we organize a program at my school?**

With more than 90 teenagers becoming pregnant each hour, schools needs resources like *Promoting Sexual Responsibility* to help find solutions.

Item #3299-3-00-D
Nonmembers: **$26.95**
NEA Members: $22.95

ORDER TODAY!

To order online, go to www.nea.org/books.

To order by phone, call 800-229-4200, toll free.

NEA Professional Library—*THE* Bookstore for Educators

Shipping and handling charges will be added to every order.

Diversity Calendar

MARCH

MARCH—IRISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Erin go bragh! This month is a time to remember the many ways America is enriched by contributions from people of Irish heritage.

MARCH—YOUTH ART MONTH

Youth Art Month emphasizes the value of art education and support for school art programs. Visit www.nga.gov/kids/kids.htm, filled with art adventures, activities, and projects.

MARCH—MUSIC IN OUR SCHOOLS MONTH

Since its beginning in 1973 as a one-day celebration, this event has grown into a month-long celebration in schools across the country. Find out more at the National Association for Music Education, www.menc.org/guides/miosm/MIOSMFront.html.

MARCH—NATIONAL MENTAL RETARDATION AWARENESS MONTH

The purpose of this event is to increase public awareness of mental retardation and related developmental disabilities. Visit the Arc, a leading organization on mental retardation, at www.thearc.org.

MARCH 1—KOREAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT DAY

Celebrated by citizens in both North and South Korea, this annual observance recalls the beginning of Korea's peaceful movement in 1919 to gain independence from occupying Japan.

MARCH 4—FIRST WOMAN TO SERVE IN CONGRESS

In 1917, three years before the 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote, Jeannette Rankin began her term as a congresswoman from Montana—the first female elected to Congress.

MARCH 8—INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Honoring working women everywhere, this day is also the anniversary of the historic 1857 garment and textile workers' strike in New York, one of the first organized actions by women anywhere.

MARCH 10—ANNIVERSARY OF HARRIET TUBMAN'S DEATH

Born into slavery, Tubman freed herself and dedicated her life to freeing others and advancing the rights of Blacks and women.

MARCH 21—BAHÁ'Í NEW YEAR (NAW-RÚZ)

Beginning at sunset on March 20, this day is one of nine holy days of the year for those of the Bahá'í faith. Visit www.us.bahai.org.

MARCH 23—EASTER SUNDAY

Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ on the first Sunday following the first full moon on or after the vernal equinox.

MARCH 25—GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

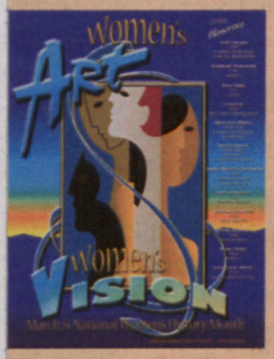
In 1821, the Greeks began their revolution against Ottoman rule, and fought until 1829 when the modern Greek nation was established.

"My colleagues know that I am an outspoken supporter of the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education. *Are You?* Join me in helping to elect candidates who care about education. Give to the Fund!"

Emma Shepard,
Reading Content Coach K-3,
Westwood Elementary School
Shreveport, Louisiana

Contribute to The NEA Fund for Children & Public Education.
Go to **www.neafund.org**.

Women's History Month



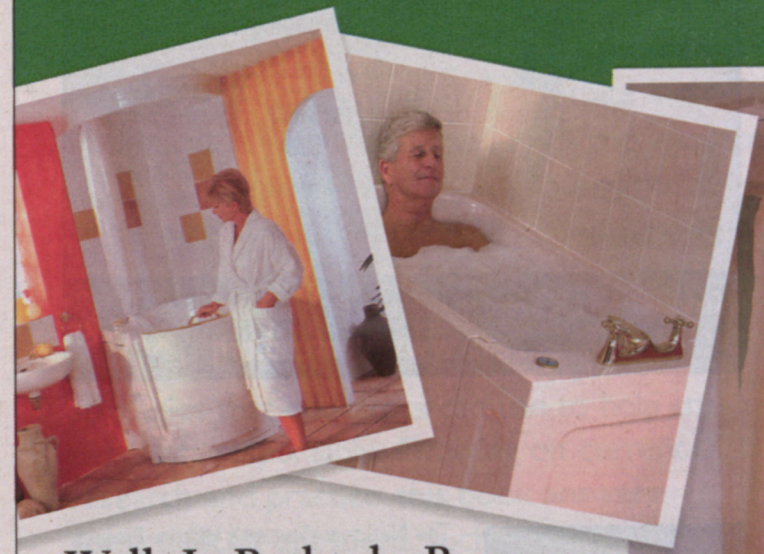
The National Women's History Project (NWHP) was founded in 1980. Within a few years it spawned National Women's History Week, and in 1987, with support from women's organizations, museums, libraries, and educators, the NWHP successfully petitioned Congress to expand the observance to a month. The 2008 theme is *Women's Art: Women's Vision*. Visit **www.nwhp.org** to find out more. You'll find a calendar of important historical dates featuring women, notable women's birthdays, and more resources to download and buy.

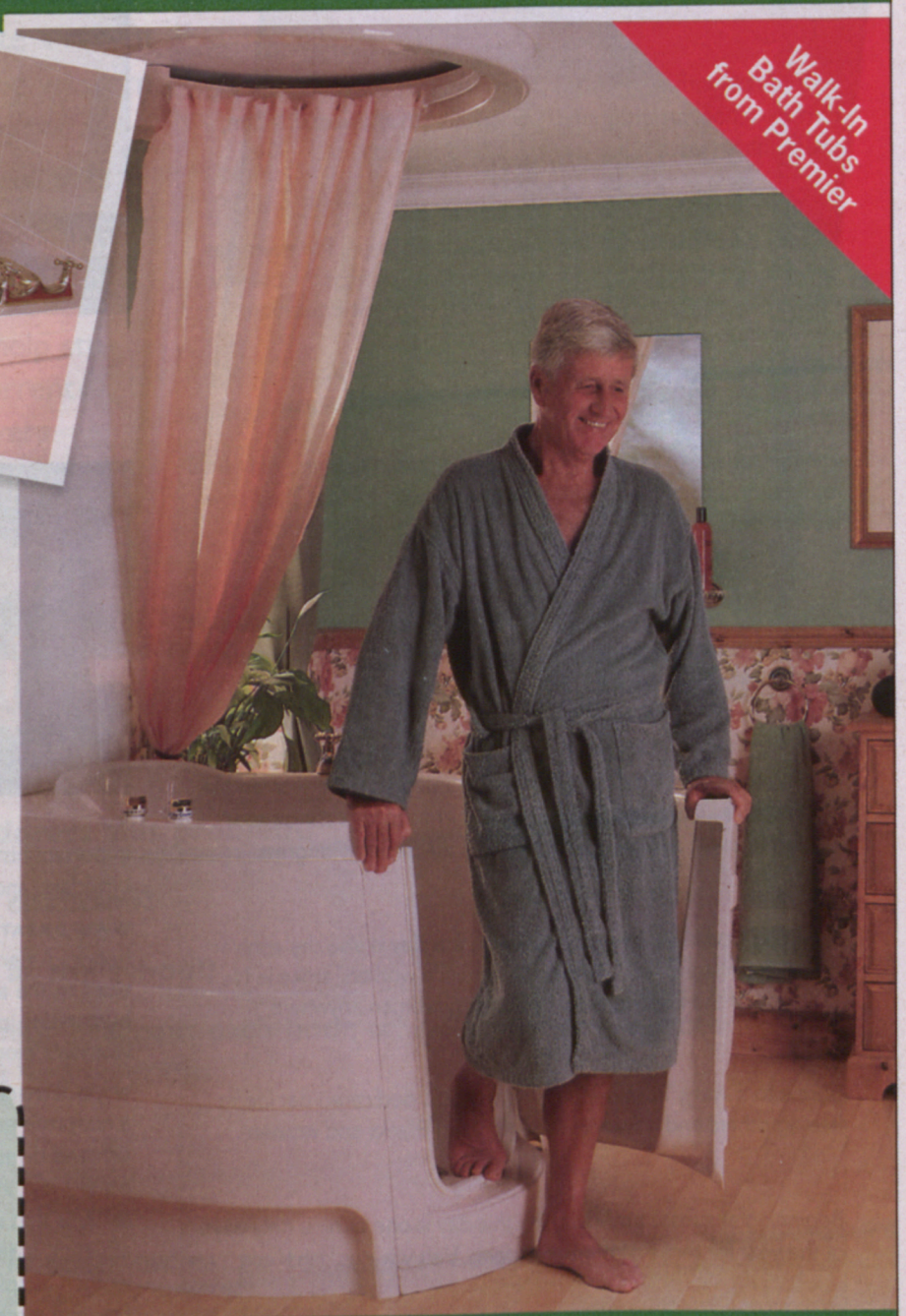
WWW.GREATWOMEN.ORG The National Women's Hall of Fame honors American women who have made important contributions to the arts, athletics, business, education, government, the humanities, philanthropy, and science. Check out its collection of women's biographies, where inductees are added continually.

WWW.NWHM.ORG The National Women's History Museum is a nonprofit educational institution dedicated to celebrating the rich and diverse history of women's contributions to American history, culture, and society. The cybermuseum houses online exhibits that include women's suffrage; women's rights; women in athletics, industry, and education; women's roles in World War II; women as spies; women in Jamestown, women in the Progressive Era; and more.

HTTP://LIBRARY.DUKE.EDU/SPECIALCOLLECTIONS/COLLECTIONS/DIGITIZED/AFRICAN-AMERICAN-WOMEN The African-American Women section of Duke University's Special Collections Library houses a small but choice cache of letters, manuscripts, and other materials pertaining to a history of African-American women in this country.

It's So Easy, I Just Open The Door And Step In!





Walk-In Bathtubs By Premier. As we get older bathing can become more of a challenge. Premier has an extensive range of walk-in tubs which have helped improve the lives of thousands of people. Call today or return the coupon and discover which one of our superb walk-in tubs could benefit you the most.

Premier™ Care in Bathing

Please send me a FREE Premier Brochure of Walk-in Tubs

CODE 241048

Name

Telephone

Address

City

State Zip

Send to: Premier Bathrooms Inc, 2330 South Nova Rd, South Daytona, Florida 32119

CALL NOW • TOLL FREE

1-800-578-2899

SOURCE CODE 241048

On the Web

SCIENCE SOUND BYTES GO DOWN EASY

The American Chemical Society (ACS) has launched *Bytesize Science*, an educational and entertaining podcast for young listeners. *Bytesize Science* translates cutting-edge scientific discoveries from ACS' 36 peer-reviewed journals into stories for young listeners about science, health, medicine, energy, food, and other topics.

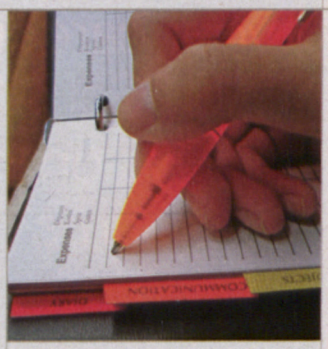
New installments are posted every Monday and are available free of charge. The archive includes items on environmental threats to orcas, a scientific explanation for why some people love chocolate, unlikely new uses for compact discs, and a hairy tale about "hairy roots."

Don't have an iPod? Listen to episodes with your Web browser. Go to **http://feeds.feedburner.com/bytesizescience**.

FREE WEB TOOL CONNECTS TEACHERS AND FAMILIES

SchoolNotes is a free service that teachers can use to post information online, such as homework assignments, resource links, and even "flash-card" quizzes. Parents and students can be notified automatically when the teacher updates the Web page. SchoolNotes complements school sites by allowing teachers to share information on the Web without worrying about HTML or FTP because there is no programming required.

Always available, this free community service allows parents, teachers, and students to access school information from home, work, school, or anywhere the Internet is available. Find out more at **www.schoolnotes.com**.



HARNESSING THE POLITICAL POWER OF YOUTH

ServiceVote is a campaign to engage young people in the political process, beginning with voting. ServiceVote 2008 challenges youth to think critically about how they can affect issues by getting involved in the political process and provides opportunities to participate in the presidential election. The Web site features up-to-date news and information on the various races, the presidential candidates, and the defining issues; opportunities for peer interaction and dialogue through a discussion forum where youth can post videos, images, and audio files; and resources to take action through service in the election and in the policy process. Help youth get involved at **www.servicevote.org**.

BOOKS BY NEA MEMBERS

TELLING TALES OUT OF SCHOOL

By Dale Davis

Unemployed Cyrus Henshaw does something he swore he would never do—he applies for a teaching position. Twenty-four hours later he's offered a job as a social studies teacher at Pedagogue Middle School. The peculiar staff are a puzzle, to say the least, but what Cyrus really wants to know—and what nobody will tell him—is *what happened to Mr. Marlowe, his predecessor?* A comic novel with a rainbow of colorful characters. 56 pp. $19.99. To order, visit www.tatepublishing.com.

JOKES FROM THE SCHOOL BUS: JOKES WE THOUGHT WE MADE UP

By Jerry Harwood

Why were all of Santa's helpers depressed? Because they had low elf-esteem. *What fish goes well with a peanut butter sandwich?* A jellyfish. When you're in the fourth grade, it doesn't get better than this. A 30-year veteran of the classroom and school bus has compiled a collection of wacky jokes that will have kids rolling in the aisles. Quick, before they grow up! Ages 4–8. 96 pp. $9.95 from Vantage Press. Visit www.amazon.com to order.

SOMETIMES I DREAM

By Michael Lariviere

Five students and one teacher go on an incredible field trip without ever leaving the classroom—and without knowing exactly what they're getting into. Duped into playing guinea pigs by the sinister Dr. Clark, the group find themselves trapped in cyber warfare, where they really can get hurt unless they learn to trust each other. But first, they have to drop their pre-conceived ideas. An absorbing novel for young teens who read at a lower level. 106 pp. $20.99 from Xlibris Corporation. Visit www.Xlibris.com to order.

GYM SCOOTER FUN & GAMES

By Guy Bailey

Especially written for elementary and middle school P.E. teachers, this book covers the many ways that the versatile gym scooter can be used to promote fitness and the development of various movement skills. A wide variety of games and activities are presented, along with complete instructions, suggested grade level and number of players, illustrations, and more. 97 pp. $15.95 from Educators Press. To order, visit www.educatorspress.com.

PHOTO: LAVINIA MARIN

Enhance your career with Cal U's 100% online programs

California University of Pennsylvania's online programs were created for you...the busy working professional looking to advance your career, but unable to fit traditional classroom study into your schedule.

Master of Arts Teaching Program helps you expand your teaching skills. It correlates with the five core propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and provides information about national certification.

The Administrative Program for Principals provides a personalized approach whether you are seeking principal's certification, a master's degree, or want to enhance your teaching and leadership skills.

The Superintendent Letter of Eligibility Program can be completed in seven semesters at times that are convenient for you.

For more information, call 866-595-6348, e-mail calugo@cup.edu or visit **www.cup.edu/go.**

California University of Pennsylvania is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

CAL U

GLOBAL ONLINE

California University of Pennsylvania
Building Character. Building Careers.

A proud member of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.

On TV

AMERICAN POLITICS/ROAD TO THE WHITE HOUSE

C-Span, Sundays at 6:30 p.m., ET/PT.

C-Span is doing its civic best to engage students and voters alike with pre-convention programming. If you and your students can't get enough of the Sunday *Road* show—a weekly summary of life on the campaign trail—go to the Web site at www.c-span.org. On alternating weeks, *American Politics* looks at the electoral process as well as other political issues. And C-Span's bus tour is on the campaign trail, stopping at schools to explain the campaign. More information is available at www.campaignnetwork.org and www.c-spanclassroom.org, a membership service to teachers.

WHO KNEW? WITH MARSHALL BRAIN

National Geographic Channel, March 13, 20, 27, 8 p.m., ET/PT.

Engineer Marshall Brain, author of *How Stuff Works*, translates his passion for "stuff" into an upbeat new TV series. As tour guide, Brain focuses on things made in America, showing how workers and state-of-the-art machines create objects of desire and fascination. This three-part series begins with a visit to Trek Bikes in Wisconsin to explore how their road bike is made from the same lightweight, super strong material used to make stealth bombers. The second episode features factories making speedboats and golf balls and finishes at the famous Zambelli fireworks company. In episode three, he examines how cars, airbags, and money are made. For more, go to www.nationalgeographic.com/channel.

IRON LADIES OF LIBERIA

PBS/Independent Lens, March 18, 10 p.m., ET. Check local listings.

In 2006, following decades of civil war, the Republic of Liberia elected Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf as president, making this 60-something grandmother the first woman to lead an African country. As Johnson-Sirleaf and her team of women appointees set about rebuilding and re-democratizing their country, filmmaker Daniel Junge followed to see if a gender shift could affect change. The Iron Ladies, as they are called, have made an impact, though it's been slow going. The new president's most important achievements have been in restructuring the country's debt, but citizens of the capital Monrovia might be more impressed that their Number One Iron Lady has restored electricity to the city. More information can be found at www.pbs.org/ironladies.

FRONTLINE: BUSH'S WAR

PBS, March 24 & 25, 9 p.m., ET/PT. Check local listings.

On the fifth anniversary of the 2003 Iraq invasion, *Frontline* presents a two-part update with fresh analysis from producer Michael Kirk, who produced *Cheney's War* and *The Torture Question*. Kirk says, "No one has laid out the entire narrative to reveal, in one epic story, the scope and detail of how this war began and how it has been fought, both on the ground and deep inside the government." *Frontline* has closely followed this story since before the invasion, and has collected a wealth of video data. Find more information at www.pbs.org and at www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline.

KIDSNET, partnering with educators and the media for more than 25 years, provided these viewing suggestions. Visit www.kidsnet.org.

ILLUSTRATION: C-SPAN; PHOTOS FROM TOP: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL, EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

FUNDRAISER

WE BUY USED CELL PHONES
& pay up to $50 for each phone!

Some phones have no value. See purchase price list for individual models www.pacebutler.com

THE PERFECT FUNDRAISER

FREE COLLECTION BOXES PROVIDED

1. Collect inactive cell phones.
2. Box cell phone handsets and batteries only. (No accessories, chargers, etc.)
3. Ship FREE (with prepaid label)
4. We will sort the different models and send your check within 4 days!

PaceButler corporation

www.pacebutler.com
800-248-5360 • 405-755-3131

SEMINAR

SEMINAR ON HOLOCAUST AND JEWISH RESISTANCE

For application, write:

Jewish Labor Committee
Holocaust Seminar
25 East 21st Street
New York, NY 10010

tel: 212-477-0707
fax: 212-477-1918
web: www.jewishlabor.org

Applications must be received by *April 1, 2008*

Seminar in Poland and Israel for 16 days, July 6-21, 2008. This acclaimed seminar is for secondary school teachers who implement Holocaust studies in their classrooms. Our group visits historic sites, hears from prominent scholars, and testimonies of survivors. Teachers pay $2,300 for round-trip travel from JFK Airport, New York, all hotels (shared rooms), bus transportation and two meals daily. Sponsored by the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, American Federation of Teachers and the Educators Chapter of the Jewish Labor Committee, with support from the Atran Foundation, the Gruss Life Monument Funds, the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

NEA PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY

Whatever your role in education, the NEA Professional Library is your source for books, Read Across America promotional tools, NEA logo items, and great gift or giveaway merchandise. Items are available through our online store. Ordering is easy and secure! www.nea.org/books. We continually update the site to reflect new items, specials, and highlight upcoming events. Visit often – you don't want to miss a thing!

TRAVEL

EDUCATORS B&B TRAVEL NETWORK
6,000 Locations Worldwide!

$40 A NIGHT FOR TWO!

Choose your hosts-We do the rest

"Our Best Vacation!"
Pat & Ed, Lanoka Harbor, NJ #1359

PO Box 5279 - Eugene OR 97405
800-377-3480

www.educatorstravel.com

MB WEB SITE

Visit the **NEA Member Benefits Web Site**. Log on to neamb.com and discover the power of information at your fingertips. All the latest NEA Member Benefits information is just a click away. You can access program updates, current rates, special offers and announcements, Web Site highlights—and more!

To place a Marketplace advertisement...

All ads must be accompanied by a completed and signed Insertion Order and appropriate payment. You can request an Insertion Order at:

- adsales@nea.org
- FAX: (202) 822-7377
- Phone: (202) 822-7260

Rates:

Basic classified rate is $120 per line with a 3-line minimum per ad. A line consists of 30 characters, including space and punctuation.

Display ad prices are based on $800 per column inch.

Frequency or member discounts available. Complete pricing information is outlined on the Insertion Order.

Contact:

NEA Marketing & Information Services
1201 16th St., N.W., Ste. 514
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 822-7260

TRAVEL

Travel With Other Teachers Departing July 14, 2008

NATIONAL PARKS TOUR

6 Nat'l Parks – Daily Sightseeing – 15 Days – from $899*

Travel in your comfortable motor coach and visit six U.S. national parks including *Zion, Bryce Canyon, Arches, Canyonlands, Yosemite & Sequoia National Parks.* You'll also visit Salt Lake City with city tour; Kennecott Copper Mine; Silver Zone Pass; St. George & Moab, UT; Reno, Lake Tahoe, Carson City, Virginia City, & Las Vegas, Nevada; Fresno, CA; and more! *Price per person, double occupancy, plus $149 tax, service, & gov't fees. Includes 14 nights hotels, baggage handling and daily sightseeing. Optional airfares start at $400.

CALL FOR BROCHURE 7 DAYS A WEEK:

YMT Vacations 1-800-736-7300

WEB SITE GIVEAWAY

FREE! Online Financial Seminars
for NEA Members and Their Families

The *Investing in Your Future* program provides quality investment education in a convenient, on-demand format. A series of five courses covers key issues of financial planning and investing.

The program also includes access to online stock and mutual fund selection tools and data.

Register today at
neamb.com/investinginyou

BetterInvesting | nea Member Benefits | FINRA

Brought to You by NEA Member Benefits and BetterInvesting through a grant from the FINRA Investor Education Foundation

A NURSE'S TALE

Of buck teeth, nebulizers, and the Tooth Fairy

BY MAGGIE BEALL

A 15-MINUTE NIGHTMARE:

It was a quarter past three in the health room and I had a child who had been there since 2 p.m.—a little third-grade girl who had a fever. No one was available at home to come get her.

At 3:15, she vomited across a huge area of the health room in front of the asthma inhaler cabinet.

Simultaneously, two students from phys. ed. came in saying, "We need our inhalers!" I checked them with the stethoscope, jumped over the vomit, and got the inhalers for them.

At the same time, there was a kindergartener in the bathroom, standing in a puddle of urine because of a bladder accident, naked because he had taken off his wet clothes.

Meanwhile, buses were rolling into the parking lot.

As I escorted the sick child out to the bus so the driver would know he had a child with a fever, the rest of the staff were waving to me from the parking lot, "Come here, Maggie! Come here, Maggie!" A child had hit his head in phys. ed. and I had to make a decision: Should we put him on the bus?

In assessing his pupillary response, I noticed something was not quite right, so I got his mom to come get him. He ended up being transferred to the hospital with swelling of the brain.

That was one of the worst quarter hours of my career. Luckily, it's not all like that.

> "We're doing bladder catheterizations, tube feedings, insulin pump monitoring."

I became a school nurse because, as a child, I had what we call buck teeth, or an overbite, to the point where my brothers called me "Bucky Beaver."

My parents could not afford the orthodontic treatment that I needed, but our school nurse, Marie Kelly, took a picture of my smile and sent it to our state capital in Albany, where they provided the orthodontia that changed my life: I could smile, not cover my mouth with my hand, and not be afraid of being teased.

Another reason I became a school nurse is that I enjoy long-term relationships, and when you work with a family, you may have a relationship as long as 12 years by the time all the siblings have finished school.

I've worked in hospitals, but there, it's a very short relationship.

The thing I like the most (and that I didn't expect when I became a school nurse) is the response I get from students. When I go into classrooms, I like to use drama. When we do dental hygiene, I dress as the Tooth Fairy. Later on, they'll see my costume and say, "There! We know you're the Tooth Fairy!"

And I'll just say, "Oh, no. We just look alike, and I let her leave her costume here."

Since I started as a school nurse 23 years ago, many things have changed in our student population—drastically.

Some of the most pronounced changes are in technology. We have students who, 20 years ago, might have been in specialty care centers because of their disabilities—a school for the deaf or the blind, or a children's rehab institute.

Now, because of technology, we have user-friendly equipment that allows children to attend their community schools.

It's not unusual to have nebulizers going in the health room. We have students with cerebral palsy in motorized wheel chairs. We're doing bladder catheterizations, tube feedings, insulin pump monitoring.

So technology has brought students who would not have been in their community into the school—where they should be. But it's taken us a little time. We're scurrying around to catch up with the needs of those students.

And that's one of the many reasons why it's so important that every school have a qualified school nurse.

You really need someone who can see the difference between a harmless bump on the head and a concussion.

Maggie Beall is the school nurse at Dassa McKinley Elementary School in West Sunbury, Pennsylvania. This essay is adapted from her video profile in the "I Am an Educator" series on the NEA Web site. Watch it at www.nea.org/neatoday/iamaneducator.html.

PHOTO: ROBERT McFERREN

0%* Intro APR for 12 billing cycles on Balance Transfers and Cash Advance Checks

The NEA RateSmart® Credit Card, one of the lowest rates anywhere, just got lower!

- **6.0% APR*** on all purchases
- **0% Introductory APR** for 12 billing cycles on balance transfers and cash advance checks
- **No transaction fee** if you transfer your balances when applying (a 3% transaction fee, no less than $5, applies to any other balance transfer or cash advance check)
- **No annual fee**

(See below for APR information on the NEA School Days Credit Card.)

Apply now: call 1-888-758-7946

(TTY users: 1-800-833-6262) Mention priority code FAB8F8.

nea Member Benefits
neamb.com

Brought to you by:
Bank of America

*The Annual Percentage Rate (APR) for Purchases, Balance Transfers, and Cash Advance Checks is a variable rate, currently 6.0% for NEA RateSmart accounts, or 15.99% for NEA School Days accounts. The account you receive will be determined based on your creditworthiness. The APR for Bank and ATM Cash Advances is a variable rate, currently 17.99% for both NEA RateSmart and NEA School Days accounts. The current Introductory APR for Balance Transfers and Cash Advance Checks is 0% through your first 12 statement Closing Dates. Keep in mind if your payment is late or your balance exceeds the credit limit, the Introductory APR will end before the advertised expiration date. Transaction fee for Bank and ATM Cash Advances, and for purchases of wire transfers and other cash equivalents is 3% (min. $5, max. $125). Transaction fee for Balance Transfers and Cash Advance Checks is 3% (min. $5, max. $125). Transaction fees will be waived on balance transfers requested at the time of application. Transaction fee for any transaction made in a foreign currency: 1% of the U.S. Dollar amount of each such transaction. We reserve the right to change the Variable APRs in our discretion, including, for example, the margins. If your account has balances that are subject to different APRs, your payments are applied to the balance with the lowest APR before any payments are applied to balances with higher APRs. This means that balances with higher APRs are not reduced until balances with lower APRs have been paid off. Balance Transfers may not be used to pay off or pay down any account issued by FIA Card Services, N.A. For more information about the rates, fees, other costs, and benefits associated with the use of these credit cards, call the telephone number appearing above. This credit card program is issued and administered by FIA Card Services, N.A. MasterCard is a registered trademark of MasterCard International Incorporated, and is used by the issuer pursuant to license. Bank of America and the Bank of America logo are registered trademarks of Bank of America Corporation.

©2008 Bank of America Corporation

CCNT0308

You may love the thrill of the ups and downs...
just not with your money.
NEA-Sponsored Money Market
3.88% APY†
Minimum Opening Balance $500
Rates are accurate as of 2/1/2008
NEA-Sponsored CD
3.75% APY*
3-month Term
Minimum Opening Balance $1,000
Rates are accurate as of 2/1/2008

With the high yields of the NEA-Sponsored Money Market and CD Accounts, you don't have to risk all your money in a volatile stock market.

As an NEA member, you don't have to take chances with your hard-earned money. With NEA-Sponsored Money Market and CD Accounts, you can earn consistently high member-only yields that are among the highest in the nation, along with the safety of FDIC insurance. Open an account today and start getting steady and stable returns that will help make your money grow.

Member-only benefits include:

- Yields that have consistently ranked among the highest in the nation
- FDIC-insured up to the maximum amount allowed by law
- Low minimum opening deposit of $500 for Money Market Savings and $1,000 for CD Accounts
- CD terms available from three to 120 months
- Offered by Bank of America, N.A.

Open an NEA-Sponsored Money Market and CD Account today.

To open an account or for current rates and yields, call 1-800-426-5268
and mention **priority code JA15312** and **GROUP I.D. # 10394**
(Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET)

†For the NEA-Sponsored Money Market Account®, the minimum opening balance to obtain the Annual Percentage Yield (APY) is $500. The current APYs with the bonus are: for balances of $500 to $49,999–3.88%, for balances of $50,000 or more–4.14%. The APYs are based on a bonus rate of 1% for the first 60 days with a limit of one bonus period per member. The current APYs without the bonus are: for balances of $500 to $49,999–3.71%, for balances of $50,000 or more– 3.97%. For balances below $500 the bonus is not applicable and the APY is 3.20%. The APYs are accurate as of 2/1/08. Interest compounded monthly and posted to account monthly. The rates may change after the account is opened. Fees could reduce earnings on the account. Check writing is not available for Money Market Savings accounts in Washington and Idaho.

*NEA-Sponsored CD® Annual Percentage Yields (APYs) are accurate as of 2/1/08, based on a $1,000 minimum opening balance. Penalty will be imposed for early withdrawal. Fees could reduce earnings.

FDIC-insured up to the maximum amount allowed by law.

The NEA-Sponsored Money Market Savings and CD Account rates and APYs are available exclusively to NEA members who open their accounts online at neamb.com or by phone. These rates and APYs do not apply to accounts opened at Bank of America banking centers.

Bank of America is a registered trademark of Bank of America Corporation.

Absolutely no membership dues are used to market this program.

Bank of America, N.A. Member FDIC.

© 2008 Bank of America Corporation.

nea Member Benefits
neamb.com

FDIC

CDNT0308